

# 2024 ASSESSMENT REPORT

## ANH315117 ANCIENT HISTORY

### General Comments

In this comparatively small subject, an even smaller number of enrolled candidates actually sat the exam which may be a cause for concern. The high number of Preliminary Achievements this year possibly indicates that more candidates are completing the subject out of interest, rather than with the goal of contributing points toward their ATAR. Many candidates demonstrated sufficient knowledge for a Commendable Achievement while there was a smaller number of Exceptional Achievements in 2024. This year only Greece and Rome were selected for study in Sections A and B, but in Section C the full range of available civilisations was represented. This section featured some excellent responses on Egyptian, Chinese and Assyrian leaders, in addition to some outstanding Greek and Roman responses. Candidates are not disadvantaged by studying a different civilisation in this section, provided they are prepared to conduct thorough research on the historical context of the selected individual including contemporary and modern interpretations.

Overall, the exam questions were open, clear and invited strongly argued responses. In this long-running subject it is quite a challenge to set new questions that satisfy the External Assessment Specifications. Question 2 was problematic as it instructed candidates to “assess evidence” which is not examined in Criterion 3, 4 or 6 and this difficulty was addressed in the Marking Tool. While some candidates did assess the validity of their sources, candidates were not penalised for ignoring this element of the question since they were already required to synthesise many elements in their response.

Markers were disappointed to note that too many candidates still submitted prepared responses that did not address the set question. Often the terms used by candidates in their introduction indicated that the essay was a response to a different question, even including wording from the 2023 exam question. Students and teachers are reminded that these narrow responses will be penalised on the relevant content criterion and that candidates must be able to adapt their content to suit the specific question.

Overall, most candidates provided positive evidence of engagement with the course content and conducted some analysis in their responses. It was disappointing, however, to see that too many candidates still failed to provide at least one primary and one secondary source in each essay despite their teachers best efforts to impress upon them the importance of referring to sources. Examining and utilising reputable sources is a cornerstone of all historical study. Candidates are strongly advised to practise listing a number of relevant sources in their planning before they begin their essay writing and to check they have used them appropriately to support their argument.

## Criterion 3 – General Comments

This criterion examines the ability of the candidate to provide quality communication techniques relevant to the discipline and the question. It was pleasing to see that most candidates employed a coherent essay structure in their responses with a thesis statement in their introduction leading to a cogent conclusion. In general, the spelling of place names, individuals and terms was accurate and overall, expression was sound.

There were many strong responses with a targeted introduction that addressed all parts of the question and identified the subject of the response: a site, event, society, core element, feature or individual. Effective introductions addressed the question directly, included a thesis statement and employed terms from the question. Using topic sentences at the start of each paragraph clearly indicates the subject of the paragraph and advances the thesis. Using key terms from the question ensures that points are relevant, and the response is less likely to lapse into narrative or generalised description.

One problem that concerned markers was the inconsistent use of tense that was evident in too many papers and candidates are reminded to use past rather than present tense in their responses. An appropriate academic style is expected so first person singular and second person- “I” and “you”- should be avoided and “one” can sound too formal. Candidates may choose to use third person - “Modern historians are unsure of the reasons why ...”- or first-person plural - “We are unsure of the reasons why...” Psychological or sociological approaches, concepts and terms should not be employed in this history exam.

On a practical note, candidates are reminded not to write in pencil as it fades and becomes difficult for markers to read under lights. It was a shame to find that some illegible responses were quite lengthy and showed tantalising hints of being very sound essays as they could not score well. Candidates with handwriting difficulties are encouraged to apply for reasonable adjustments early in the year so they can best demonstrate their knowledge and skills in the exam.

## Criterion 4 – General Comments

This criterion examines the candidate’s ability to use appropriate evidence to support their arguments and interpretations and is a requirement. “Evidence” includes relevant and accurate historical details and developments in addition to information from significant primary and secondary sources. Candidates are expected to refer to interpretations by modern historians who are well known experts in their field.

In general, most responses referenced their sources effectively using the name/date convention. Stronger candidates were rewarded for drawing upon the most significant primary sources including archaeological, artistic, epigraphic and literary evidence, as appropriate. These candidates integrated a range of historical evidence and commentary from recognised secondary sources in their arguments. Usually, these sources were named at the start of a sentence that made a strong point about the topic and were not just “stuck in brackets” at the end of a sentence. It was obvious from the quality of some stronger responses that these candidates were well practised in integrating both primary and secondary sources in their essays.

Less successful responses were limited in their use of source material, sometimes referring to only one source in the entire essay and did not present a satisfactory, evidence-based response. These responses were often vague, displayed a lack of knowledge about the society or understanding of what was required to successfully respond to the set question. It may be useful for candidates to practise writing short paragraph responses about key topics throughout the year, including a primary and secondary source in each paragraph.

## Section A Question 1

Candidates are reminded that the focus of this section of the course is historiography – the study of sources, methods and assumptions used by historians to interpret the past. The selected civilisation forms a case study for the exploration of methodology used by archaeologists and historians.

The essay is not an invitation to discuss “everything I know” about the site, event, development or era. The exam question in this section required targeted argument about the validity of historians’ interpretations of a site, event, development or era. By listing only two qualities to be considered – reliability and contestability – the question enabled most candidates to present coherent, detailed responses. The essay’s conclusion needed to offer a direct assessment of our current understanding. Better responses included a soundly argued conclusion that referred directly to the set question and thesis statement, often making the inference that our understanding is still incomplete. Candidates are reminded that it is acceptable to be tentative in their conclusions and to accept that no single interpretation is sufficient.

Skilful candidates presented a thesis statement in the introduction and evaluated the sources and historical details used to argue their case. Often, they related changes in scholars’ aims, methodology and interpretations to the development of archaeology since the early nineteenth century from treasure seeking and collecting to a more rigorous scientific discipline. They sought to explore what isn’t yet understood completely in addition to what is widely accepted as valid interpretation.

## Criterion 5

### Greece

#### Delphi

The question was generally well addressed although there were again too many formulaic responses that simply related information about the chosen focus without reference to the question. Weaker responses did not offer a view about the extent of our understanding, as required by the question. Responses were equally divided between Delphi and Troy with equally impressive responses concerning each site.

Most candidates who wrote about Delphi attempted to focus on several significant contested issues to determine whether a “valid understanding” of the site was possible. Some candidates struggled to find points of contention and chose a very narrow focus for their discussion which limited their success. Candidates are advised to avoid focusing on a single issue, such as the debate over the possible causes of the oracle’s trance-like state. While the existence of hallucinogenic gasses in ancient times is a valid debate, this issue should be examined within the wider context of interrogating our understanding of the role, actions and significance of the oracle at Delphi in the history of many civilisations.

Candidates are reminded that it is still debated whether we fully understand the nature and roles of this complex site over its long history. Some candidates missed the opportunity to consider the many gaps in our understanding of Delphi – what were the roles of slaves in competition and women at the site; where was the hippodrome located; how were the Delphi priests so well informed about national and international events; was Delphi a centre of trade in Greece in addition to its religious function? Dr Michael Scott is one modern scholar who raises these gaps in our knowledge in his writings. Another obstacle to our understanding is the apparent contradiction of Delphi being revered as a place of truce and peaceful Pan-Hellenic competition, but also being embroiled in warfare: it was the cause of two Sacred Wars and its officials openly took sides with Sparta in the Peloponnesian War.

Candidates sometimes struggled to present a thesis as to whether we have a “valid understanding” of the site/event, but most did adequately discuss the reliability and contestability of the evidence.

The better Delphi answers considered how important the site was in the context of Ancient Greek society and explored the range and validity of the written and archaeological evidence. They then considered what were key areas of contestability or agreement. Some outstanding Delphi answers considered how important the site was in the context of Ancient Greek society including the use of oracles to assist in decision making and its significance in promoting the concept of panhellenism. Interpretations of the oracle’s influence over time, including the most famous utterances and its political use by leaders such as Cleomenes I, were fruitful topics to explore. It was valid to argue that the plethora of primary evidence – architectural, artistic, literary, epigraphic, numismatic – all contribute to a rich understanding of the many functions of Delphi.

Concerning sources of information, candidates are advised not to spend too much time describing Delphi’s origin myths and whether they can be considered reliable and historically accurate. While these sources provide useful evidence about the nature of Greek beliefs, scholars do not consider them to be historical records, and this is not contested. There was some weak discussion of Herodotus being considered an unreliable source compared to Plutarch, since only the latter served as a priest at Delphi. These candidates did not consider the possibility of changes in the oracle’s practices over the 400 years that separated the two writers. Weaker responses read more like a project on Delphi rather than analysis of a range of sources of information that contribute to our understanding of the site. Candidates who drew upon several secondary sources in addition to a range of primary ones were rewarded.

### The Destruction of Troy

Candidates displayed pleasing knowledge of the characteristics of this site over time, and were able to explain how our understanding has been furthered by developments in archaeology and the scientific analysis of evidence. Often their conclusions were tentative, and they were open to future discoveries leading to more reliable interpretations. Using Troy as a case study, the most accomplished candidates analysed how developments in archaeology as a science over the period of the site’s exploration led to increasingly more detailed and reliable interpretations of its history. Some candidates mistakenly described Eric Cline as a climate scientist instead of a modern historian who has drawn upon climate science studies of the Mediterranean region. He hypothesises that Troy’s destruction may have been due to enormous regional social upheaval and warfare caused by a 100-year drought. Strong responses that analysed Cline’s interpretations also effectively pointed out some weaknesses in his argument.

There were some lively responses examining debate about the validity of *The Iliad* as a source of information. Better responses described how Schliemann found the text invaluable in his identification of Hissarlik as ancient Troy (Wilusa/Ilium) through its description of significant geographical features. These responses also drew upon scientific research to account for physical differences in the landscape due to the passage of time and natural forces such as earthquakes. These higher-level responses also analysed the poem's lack of reliability as a historical source due to the conventions required of an epic poem, belief in the Gods influencing events and the considerable time lapse between the poem's composition in the Bronze Age and its written version in the Iron Age.

Less effective responses were too definite in their assertions and conclusions. They variously asserted that the site of Troy has been definitively identified; Homer was a real person who visited Troy; *The Iliad* was a factual account of an actual major conflict; historians agree on the dating of Troy's strata and Troy was definitely destroyed in a war with the Greeks. Candidates may wish to consider that modern historians can be influenced by bias, the lack of Trojan written sources undermines our understanding, and developments in scientific investigation may yet reveal significant new learning about the history of the Trojan people.

Schliemann's reliability as a secondary source was a fruitful focus of analysis in this essay. His biased attitudes, need for academic recognition, ignorance of developments in geology and archaeology and crude excavation methods led to many questionable "discoveries", theories and even fabrications. But his efforts also led to some amazing discoveries that later scholars could build upon and stronger candidates acknowledged his contribution as well as his limitations. They pointed out that Schliemann's unwavering belief in Homer's ancient poem as a useful source resulted in many other investigations into sites in Greece and other lands based on evidence from ancient texts.

Concerning sources of information, strong candidates investigated the significance of the Hittite foreign office writings on clay tablets, including the diplomatic letters' references to the Ahhiyawa Kingdom which suggested there was a strong Mycenaean presence in Anatolia – potentially a threat to Trojan trade routes. Some successful responses investigated several periods of destruction in Trojan history and used evidence found in particular strata to support arguments about their likely methods of destruction. Other responses focused on the late Bronze Age collapse of Troy to examine several interpretations of the possible cause of its demise in detail, evaluating the strength of each interpretation. A characteristic of weaker responses was a narrative approach that too often recounted the story of Troy from Schliemann's initial discovery and his mistaken identification of Priam's Troy to contributions made by subsequent archaeologists and historians. To avoid storytelling instead of analysis, candidates are advised to ensure that every topic sentence makes a point relating to the question.

## Rome

### The Roman Games

All responses discussed the Roman Games option for this section. Most successful were the candidates who responded in full to the set question. Candidates needed to be clear in their line of argument and to show that they could sustain this line of argument throughout the essay. This year the question called for less discussion of the different meanings or forms and functions of the games and more explicit emphasis was placed on explaining how evidence – both ancient and modern – has informed and developed our understanding of the event.

Candidates should aim to work on developing the use of coherent paragraphs that contain topic sentences which allow consideration of what the question has actually asked of them. Most successful were candidates who were able to provide the historically detailed and evidence-based work that the question demanded.

Candidates needed to provide a wide range of highly appropriate evidence to demonstrate true evaluation of the question. Some strong responses included analysis of the specific origins, attitudes and some contextual information around key ancient sources. Most often they included a combination of Juvenal, Seneca and Pliny the Younger whom candidates described as presenting relatively rare dissenting Roman voices. Depth of argument was also present when candidates utilised the colourful and entertaining poetry of Martial and Ovid or Cicero's ambiguous attitude to the Games. Capable candidates suggested he seemed to regard the gladiator as an object lesson for Roman society yet also an aberration.

Some candidates tended to rely too much on generalised reference to ancient historians and failed to balance their argument with specific secondary support. Any number of excellent modern texts and online sources from reputable sources are readily available including commentary by Beard, Boatwright, Futtrell and Dunkle just to name a few.

Most successful candidates were able to recall and apply with confidence evidence from at least two primary and two secondary sources. Candidates who impressed demonstrated depth of analysis in their response by using a wider range of appropriate evidence. Best of all were candidates who used brief quotations or accurate paraphrases of both the primary and secondary sources called for in this question. Too often the wording of the question was ignored by weaker candidates, so the reliability and contestability of evidence were not discussed. A feature of successful responses was specific detail regarding the relevance and significance of archaeological and/or physical evidence, such as the venues themselves, mosaics, or simple souvenirs and glassware. Definitions of the Roman Games, and some reference to the great changes that occurred over time, were generally used well this year. Less successful candidates did not refer to specific examples or dates or use question specific terminology. When such historical detail was used candidates were rewarded on Criterion 5.

## Section B Question 2

The first part of the question reminded candidates to analyse and not merely describe the impact of beliefs and values, and one or more elements on a feature of the selected civilisation. There were some examples of sophisticated analysis that evaluated the ways in which beliefs influenced the development of structures and practices in the selected society. Only the most skilful candidates managed to synthesise all the aspects of the question and sources into a coherent response. The weakest responses presented three separate mini essays on beliefs, an element and a feature with little attempt at analysing the connections between them.

While candidates may choose to discuss more than one core element or key feature, the most convincing responses generally focused in detail on just one core element and its relationship to one key feature. This focus enabled the best responses to analyse in depth the impact of significant beliefs and values on the society. While detailed description of the core element is not required in the response, the most significant aspects of the element must be outlined and related to the chosen feature.

Less effective responses omitted any description of a selected core element or the prevailing beliefs and values, instead launching into generalised discussion of the key feature. Usually, the omission from the introduction of key terms from the question did not bode well for the rest of the response. Candidates are reminded to clearly name up the selected element and feature in their introduction. Some weaker responses confused the social core element with a society's

socialisation processes. Candidates are reminded that the social core element refers to the social structure of an ancient society including social hierarchies and roles, not its socialisation processes in isolation.

The role of Women and Family was the most popular feature this year. Candidates are reminded that the role and function of the family should be addressed, at least briefly, in addition to the role of women. Overall, the feature of Weapons and Warfare was managed well this year, and candidates were rewarded if they related their discussion back to an associated core element and influential beliefs and values. Several responses discussed Technology and Engineering but found it difficult to explain how this feature showed the impact of beliefs or how it related to a core element.

Some of the wording in the second instruction of the question was problematic as “assessing evidence” is not an assessable standard element in either Criterion 4 or 6. This issue was addressed in the Marking Tool, so candidates were not penalised for omitting this part of the question. In the complex Section B response there really is not time to add another layer of analysis. While some candidates did choose to assess their featured sources, this took up valuable time and was not required by markers.

## Criterion 6

### Greece

This year candidates mainly selected Athens or Sparta with a small number choosing Corinth. Less successful responses attempted to compare the beliefs and values, a core element and a key feature of both Athens and Sparta, resulting in generalised and sometimes inaccurate interpretations such as “Spartan women had equal rights to men” and “As in Athens, Spartan women could not own land”. Some effective responses briefly highlighted differences between the poleis such as the public life of Spartan women compared to the confined life of Athenian women, the banning of prostitutes in Sparta and the esteemed position of some hetairi in Athens or Sparta's reliance on methods of traditional warfare compared to Athenian innovation. The essays that discussed Corinth drew upon limited sources of information about how Corinth's society between 800-400 BCE was distinctive or typical of other Greek poleis and this limited their success.

In some weaker responses candidates inappropriately discussed a single leader's career in detail to illustrate the political system and then ran out of time to describe the feature or its connection to significant beliefs and values. Solon and Peisistratus were the most common leaders discussed in these essays which suggested that candidates had confused the different requirements of Sections B and C.

A considerable number of candidates who discussed the feature of Women and Family were able to include the variety of roles, expectations and experiences of women in different contexts such as polis, class, age, citizenship and/or ethnicity. Candidates are reminded not to inappropriately apply modern value judgements in their analysis. The aim of the response is to demonstrate

understanding of how and why beliefs and practices developed in ancient societies rather than applying modern perspectives on patriarchy, the roles of women or marriage.

Those candidates who examined Weapons and Warfare needed to give explicit examples of the values associated with military tactics, battles and developments such as hoplite advances or the use of citizen rowers on triremes. The political core element was most often examined in connection to this feature, with many candidates pointing out that political leaders were often also successful military leaders in their society. Less successful responses described several battles in detail without linking the discussion to either a core element or dominant beliefs and values.

There were several outstanding essays that analysed how Drama in the Classical period either reinforced or challenged Athenian values concerning their class and/or political structure. Well-chosen quotes and references to scenes in featured plays demonstrated deep understanding of the nature of the society. Candidates are however reminded not to waste time giving detailed summaries of the plots of their featured plays.

## Rome

Stronger responses to this question interwove discussion of Roman values such as *pietas*, *auctoritas*, *virtus*, and *fides* and interrogated how these were demonstrated within Rome's core elements and key features. Successful responses clearly explained what the core element was and how it worked in Rome, before examining the connection between the core element and the key feature. Strong responses reinforced this connection and influence in their topic and concluding sentences to clearly signpost their argument. Candidates who distinguished clearly between Republican and Imperial Rome were able to draw some useful comparisons and consider the way that beliefs and values, core elements, and key features changed and developed over time as the nature of Roman society shifted.

Weaker responses lacked balance between discussion of the core element and key feature. Some responses moved directly into a discussion of women and their role in politics for example, without outlining how the political system operated in Rome. Other responses concentrated heavily on a key feature, and it was difficult to identify the selected core element. Some ineffective responses were quite general and talked about "women" without providing specific examples. Responses that looked at prominent women, such as Cornelia or Agrippina the Younger, were able to build significantly more depth into their discussion and demonstrated their understanding of the subject.

It was pleasing to see some candidates draw on a range of primary sources in their responses. Ancient historians like Tacitus, Suetonius, and Polybius featured prominently and provided helpful detail. Literary sources, like Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, and *Petronius' Satyricon*, added valuable cultural context that helped candidates to explore Rome's patriarchal system, its beliefs and values, and how these were apparent within the core elements and key features. Responses that used relevant and detailed examples from the primary sources demonstrated that those candidates had a deep understanding of Roman society. Candidates are expected to engage with secondary scholarship. Stronger responses incorporated secondary sources into each body paragraph and engaged with the arguments of those sources. Weaker responses tended to use limited or no secondary sources or included in-text citations with limited indication of how they were using the source.

## Section C Question 3

Once again, the first part of this question was inviting while the second part presented a challenge to candidates. “Historical depictions and judgements” are a small element in the Section C content but are not assessed in Criterion 7 and many candidates lacked the knowledge required to explicitly discuss them. Candidates effectively managed the discussion of an individual’s historical context, and it was motivation that was frequently omitted from discussion or mistaken for “drive and energy”. Stronger candidates presented some criteria for evaluating the individual’s success. This often-included meeting the expectations of a leader in their society, maintaining the society’s peace and stability or expanding the territory or economy. Candidates who lacked credible secondary sources found it difficult to analyse and evaluate their individual’s success.

Some individuals lent themselves to this question as the motivations for their actions are contested and evaluation of their success has changed over time. Hatshepsut, Akhenaten, Cleomenes and Themistocles are all contentious individuals and provided rich argument for candidates. The most successful responses discussed in detail several significant actions or events to illustrate the individual’s motivation and effectiveness. Ineffective responses lapsed into narrative to tell the story of the person’s life history with little analysis or interpretation. This year the question suited candidates who had studied Livia and Thucydides, unlike past questions.

### Criterion 7

The wording of the question was effective as it reminded candidates to include evaluation in their essay planning and encouraged them to set up a strong thesis statement in the introduction. The most effective responses clearly presented points supported by extensive reference to significant sources, including modern scholarship. There was some risk of candidates applying modern attitudes and judgements to ancient societies in this section and candidates sometimes slipped into first person such as, “I think that Augustus was not a successful leader as many people were killed during his reign in Rome.”

### Assyria

The few candidates who chose to research this civilisation showed some depth of knowledge about the historical context and the possible motivations of the only selected individual: Ashurbanipal. The candidates appeared to be well prepared to address any question about their chosen individual. Better responses analysed some significant historical depictions and judgements of the individual as part of discussion of the main primary and secondary sources available for study. They detailed the ways in which the individual was shaped by, and shaped his own society, providing an argument about how well the individual fulfilled the expectations of a leader in his society. Candidates applied different criteria and a variety of scholarly interpretations to assess the extent of Ashurbanipal’s achievements.

Overall, primary sources were used well, particularly the evidence of relief sculptures detailing the king’s many brutal and cruel acts that were intended to project his military power and authority. This was contrasted with his obsession of establishing a comprehensive library in Nineveh. Better responses highlighted the different judgements made by modern historians about Ashurbanipal’s success, depending upon their perspective and criteria. Eckhart Frahm criticises the weakening of the empire under Ashurbanipal which he maintains led to its later fragmentation, while Jamie Novotny praises the king’s success in eliminating his familial rivals to secure his throne and expand Assyria’s territory.

Weaker responses provided a solid outline of Ashurbanipal's rise to power without analysing the opportunities afforded him by his historical context or his motivation in challenging his brother for leadership of Babylonia, thus provoking war. Candidates should aim to investigate several historical and modern perspectives about the leader's context, leadership qualities and success in living up to his society's expectations of a leader. This research can lead to a rich, nuanced argument.

## China

The few candidates who chose to research a leader from this civilisation selected either Liu Bei or his archrival, Cao Cao. They had clearly enjoyed the challenge of researching these powerful leaders since relatively few primary sources are available and both men's histories contain a plethora of battles. The most effective responses described the turbulent historical period in some detail, analysing the reasons why so many warlords rose to power and their desire to assume power.

Rafe de Crespigny was used well as an authoritative modern source who challenges the traditional judgement of Liu Bei as a noble hero and praises Cao Cao for his Confucian values. Historical depictions of both leaders in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (novel) and *Records of the Three Kingdoms* (biography) were explored effectively by most candidates. Candidates are encouraged to select the individual's most significant actions to examine in relation to the question rather than just recounting the outcomes of the main battles.

## Egypt

The most popular individuals selected were Hatshepsut, Akhenaten and Ramesses II. The first two leaders are particularly applicable as their reigns are still controversial and interpretations of their motivation and success have varied in modern times, giving candidates plenty of scope to analyse and evaluate their actions. This year was characterised by some stand out Hatshepsut responses.

Most successful were candidates who were able to avoid long generalised narratives relating to their chosen individual. These candidates understood that they needed to consider and then identify the motives and historical context of the chosen individual. Specific terminology was used with confidence in most responses in this section.

An inability to refer to historical depictions and judgements meant that otherwise strong responses were missing half the question. Most successful were candidates who answered the question in its entirety and highlighted this by remembering to consistently refer to specific elements of the question in their topic sentences. Also important in successful answers was an evaluation of how successful the individual was in shaping their society. This evaluation needed to be supported by highly accurate and specific evidence. Candidates should demonstrate that they are familiar with the nature of leadership in ancient society and the various roles associated with leadership.

Some well-prepared responses about Hatshepsut astutely pointed out that scholars' opinions about the historical role of this controversial leader have continued to evolve over time. Recent research on Hatshepsut was well utilised and this included a consideration of the nature of her kingship and many wide-ranging elements of her building program and temple inscription propaganda.

Secondary sources were well referred to in relation to Hatshepsut. These essays were often crafted around a contention concerning Hatshepsut's motivation and the nature of her influence in shaping New Kingdom society. Many able candidates explored the nature of co-regency through the relationship between Thutmose III and Hatshepsut and the impact of powerful figures particularly Senenmut, Hatshepsut's chief architect. Some very capable candidates discussed Hatshepsut's adoption of the Egyptian conventions of royal representation, to reinforce her legitimacy as a powerful leader. Weaker responses missed the opportunity to explore the significance of negative judgements in the attempts to obliterate her identity by re-purposing her monuments, defacing her statues and chiselling her figure from temple walls. These negative historic judgements of her leadership could be contrasted with modern scholars' appreciation of her achievements.

## Greece

There was a fairly even spread of responses across the Greek leaders: Solon, Peisistratus, Cleomenes I and Themistocles. No-one wrote on Thucydides this year even though the question was quite well-suited to this individual. Stronger candidates made discerning choices about vocabulary and used the terminology of the concepts and civilisation.

The question was multi-faceted which many candidates found challenging, and they tended to focus on some parts of the question rather than addressing all of them. In particular, they glossed over "motivation" and to a lesser extent "historical context". While many candidates had a good knowledge of the time period, they were unable to relate it to their leaders' choices and actions. The word "motivation" was problematic for many candidates who interpreted it as a personal quality akin to perseverance rather than examining key issues that prompted the individual to act.

Candidates often commented on the paucity of primary sources for their individual but there is a variety of texts, architecture and civic structures that provide evidence of the decisions and actions of most individuals. Some of Solon's poems and inscriptions survive and Herodotus, Aristotle and Plutarch wrote about many Greek leaders. Stronger candidates fully engaged with available primary sources and further supported this with the speculations of reputable secondary sources. Candidates are reminded to consider the quality of their chosen secondary sources and to use only the noted scholars in the area.

The best answers were able to skilfully integrate historical context and consider its role in motivating the individual to make choices that had an impact on their society. They also evaluated the representations of the individual in the key primary sources.

Consistently, candidates failed to address the idea of motivation or considered it as synonymous with grit or determination. Weaker answers were essentially biographies with little analysis of the impact of context or the consequences of the individual's actions. There were also some answers that had insufficient evidence for their assertions and simply lacked substance, dealing with only one or two events in the careers of the individual.

Responses that engaged positively with the primary and secondary sources were able to assess the historical depictions and judgements element of the question much more successfully. Some candidates who chose Cleomenes, for example, made some strong observations about the inherent bias that comes from Herodotus being the main primary source, and they thoughtfully examined the way that some modern scholars such as Paul Cartledge have viewed Cleomenes much more positively.

Motivation proved a challenging element of this question for some candidates, because it required candidates to analyse the available material and form their own arguments about what motivated these individuals. Stronger responses used relevant examples to build a clear position on motivation, often examining the legacy of these individuals and how we can read motivation into what they left behind. Stronger responses on Peisistratus, for example, discussed his cultural legacy of things like the Dionysia and his vigorous public building program and argued that this demonstrated his motivation to make Athens into a cultural centre. This discussion then allowed them to move easily into a discussion of Peisistratus' success.

Themistocles was a popular choice in this section and should have enabled candidates to produce strong responses since judgements about this individual have swayed between a hero who saved Greece from the Persians (Plutarch) to a slick politician who deceived the Athenians and extorted money from some poleis (Herodotus). Stronger responses drew on a range of primary and secondary evidence to consider Themistocles' force of personality and how it could explain his motivations and achievements. Weaker responses provided a description of Themistocles' activities with limited analysis or evaluation of what this tells us.

Candidates who had a stronger understanding of the individual's historical context were able to build a much more detailed discussion of how their individual moved through that world. Weaker responses often did not mention the context of the individual, the kind of political system that they lived and operated within, or key events that were happening and their effect. Candidates are encouraged to research widely to build a clear understanding of historical context.

## Rome

### Augustus

Candidates who successfully analysed Augustus' effectiveness correctly asserted early in their essay that Augustus achieved administrative accomplishments that exceeded his military successes. These candidates also used relevant discussion of how Augustus maintained institutions such as the Senate and passed laws that appeared to be in line with the ideals of the Roman Republic. Stronger responses also were able to discuss the number of moral and political reforms Augustus introduced to change society and which contributed to the development of stability in the Roman world.

Tacitus and Suetonius were useful primary inclusions and were used well in some very polished responses. Candidates in the main were able to refer to at least some very well-known primary sources such as the Ara Pacis which is notable as a form of political propaganda and the Res Geste Divi Augusti which is Augustus' own written record of his accomplishments and a self-assessment of his own motivation and success.

### Livia

Candidates who chose Livia were able to focus on her influence and motivation. These candidates were also able to describe the nature of elite women's roles in Roman society and offer analysis relating to how this experience differed from most women. These candidates identified Livia as arguably the most powerful woman during the reign of Augustus due to having unprecedented levels of power and influence through her marriage to him.

Most successful were those candidates who provided detailed analysis, rather than just description. They employed points from some excellent secondary sources such as the seminal text by Anthony Barrett, or Richard Bauman's *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*. Thus, successful candidates were able to shape their essay around the specific question to effectively identify how, through her role as Augustus' wife, Livia directly influenced the policies, decisions and lifestyle of her time. It was pleasing to see some candidates demonstrated depth in their concluding comments by contrasting the negative views of Livia communicated by Tacitus and Dio with Suetonius's more positive analysis of Livia.

# ANH315117 ANCIENT HISTORY 2024 MARKING TOOL

CRITERION 3: communicate historical ideas and information			Assessed in Sections A, B and C								
D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a limited attempt to present clear and logical interpretations and historical arguments in a coherent way.</li> <li>There are very few complete sentences and coherent paragraphs.</li> <li>There is no clear essay structure.</li> <li>Basic ideas, arguments and points of view of own and others contain frequent errors. The numerous basic errors of grammatical convention, spelling and punctuation frequently make meaning unclear.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear and logical interpretations and historical arguments are presented through a coherent structure.</li> <li>This includes complete sentences in several paragraphs as part of an essay which includes an introduction and conclusion.</li> <li>The presentation of basic ideas, arguments and points of view of their own and others may contain errors. These include basic errors of grammatical convention, spelling and punctuation although meaning is still communicated.</li> <li>There may be some dot points present, but these should be in full sentences.</li> <li>Some effort is made to include terminology relevant to the question and there is appropriate use of relevant vocabulary.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound, clear, logical, and evidence-based historical arguments are consistently presented through a coherent essay structure.</li> <li>This includes complete sentences in paragraphs as part of an essay which employs a relevant introduction and conclusion.</li> <li>The points of view of their own and others are presented by the use of accurate grammatical conventions, spelling and punctuation. There may be some errors but meaning is clearly communicated.</li> <li>The response often appropriately employs question specific terminology and the appropriate use of relevant vocabulary.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very clear, logical, coherent, evidenced based and detailed historical argument is presented through a well- developed and highly analytical essay structure.</li> <li>This consists of coherent paragraphs arranged in a logical sequence and includes a cogent introduction and conclusion.</li> <li>The points of view of their own and others are presented by the use of complex grammatical conventions and consistently accurate spelling and punctuation. There are very few errors and meaning is explicit.</li> <li>The response often includes sophisticated vocabulary and frequently incorporates question specific terminology to advance complex arguments.</li> </ul>		

## Criterion 3 comments

This criterion examines the ability of the learner to provide evidence of **quality communication techniques relevant to the discipline** and the question.

A candidate who makes **NO** written response or less than a paragraph to the exam question will get a 'Z' on this criterion. An essay of less than 1 page will likely get a D rating. Take note of responses with spelling and/ or grammar dispensations.

While the use of historical terms and sophisticated vocabulary is not directly assessed in this criterion, the 'A' response will employ them to effectively analyse the ideas and concepts present in the question.

CRITERION 4: use evidence to support historical interpretations and arguments			Assessed in Sections A, B and C								
D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little, none or inappropriate evidence used to support points.</li> <li>Only one or no reference to a primary or secondary sources.</li> <li>Incorrect references to sources.</li> <li>Includes very general and/ or few historical details with no or very little effort made to link evidence to the argument/answer.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a limited range (2) of appropriate pieces of evidence to analyse historical interpretations (particularly Q1) and support own interpretations (particularly Q2 and Q3).</li> <li>Reference is made to at least one primary or secondary source.</li> <li>Attempts to present a position which addresses the question using limited supporting evidence.</li> <li>The relevance of the evidence is not always clear and may occasionally need to be inferred by the marker.</li> <li>Inclusion of dates, events and developments is generally accurate.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a range (3-5) of appropriate evidence to analyse historical interpretations (particularly Q1) and to support own interpretations (particularly Q2 and Q3).</li> <li>At least one relevant primary source and one secondary source are used in the response.</li> <li>A clear position is presented which addresses the question based on the inclusion of historical details (dates, events, developments). These are largely accurate.</li> <li>A direct and obvious link is made between the evidence and the argument of the learner although this is not always consistent.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses a wide range (more than 4) of highly appropriate evidence to critically analyse interpretations and arguments.</li> <li>At least two significant primary sources should be referred to and at least one significant secondary source.</li> <li>Highly accurate historical details (including dates, events, developments) are included which are directly relevant to the presentation of arguments and historical interpretations in relation to the question</li> <li>Synthesises sources and historical details to develop detailed analytical interpretations and arguments.</li> </ul>		

#### Criterion 4 comments

This criterion examines the learner’s ability to **use appropriate evidence to support their arguments and/or the interpretations of others.**

Evidence should include resources such as **primary and secondary sources.**

Evidence will also include information such as **historical details and developments** with ‘B’ and ‘A’ responses requiring the consistent accuracy of information.

“Range of evidence” includes the nature and scope of the evidence, not just the number of pieces of evidence eg archaeology, art, texts (literary, inscriptions etc), numismatics.

Candidates should employ a consistent method of referencing sources – usually author and date in sentences of in brackets.

Candidates may choose to refer to, paraphrase or directly quote from literary sources. Direct quotes are NOT required for an “A” or “B” rating but may enhance argument.

CRITERION 5: describe and assess differing historical interpretations on issues affecting the ancient world			Section A only								
D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited or inaccurate discussion of an interpretation of the ancient site etc.</li> <li>• Very limited or inaccurate discussion of the usefulness of sources in aiding the understanding of an ancient site etc.</li> <li>• None or few references to the nature of some evidence possibly including historical detail and sources.</li> <li>• Response does not address the question.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies and outlines one or more historical interpretations.</li> <li>• Identifies the merit of one or more historical interpretation.</li> <li>• Attempts to discuss the reliability and contestability of some evidence.</li> <li>• Attempts to present a point of view about a valid understanding of the ancient site etc.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes in some detail one or more historical interpretations.</li> <li>• Analyses the relative merit of one or more historical interpretations.</li> <li>• Analyses the reliability and contestability of presented evidence.</li> <li>• Presents a reasoned point of view about a valid understanding of the ancient site etc.</li> <li>• May refer to the incomplete and/or imperfect nature of available evidence and implications for future study.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyses and evaluates the relative merit of one or more historical interpretations.</li> <li>• Analyses and evaluates the reliability and contestability of presented evidence.</li> <li>• Argues a reasoned and detailed point of view supported by evidence about a valid understanding of the ancient site etc.</li> <li>• May refer to the incomplete and/or imperfect nature of available evidence and implications for future study.</li> <li>• May include explicit and consistent discussion of the nature, type, origin, purpose and context of available evidence.</li> </ul>		

NOTE: The use and appropriateness of the primary and secondary sources used to support arguments in the response is assessed only in Criterion 4.

### Question 1

Considering the reliability and the contestability of primary and secondary sources, and other relevant matters, describe and assess whether historians have been able to come to a valid understanding of one (1) ancient site, significant event, development or era you have studied.

CRITERION 6: describe the nature and characteristics of an ancient civilisation			Section B only								
D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no comment on how beliefs and values and a core element impacted a core feature.</li> <li>• Omits discussion of an element of the question: beliefs and values or a core element or a key feature.</li> <li>• Includes few if any historical details and there are many inaccuracies.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies and assesses the impact of beliefs and values in a society.</li> <li>• Identifies a core element and a core feature.</li> <li>• Outlines the impact of beliefs and values and a core element on the development of a key feature.</li> <li>• Provides some historical examples and evidence.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes and assesses the impact of beliefs and values in a society.</li> <li>• Describes a core element and a core feature.</li> <li>• Describes the impact of beliefs and values and a core element on the development of a key feature.</li> <li>• Provides detailed historical examples and relevant evidence to support argument.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyses and evaluates the impact of beliefs and values in a society.</li> <li>• Describes the impact of beliefs and values and a core element on the development of a key feature.</li> <li>• Provides highly detailed and accurate historical examples and significant evidence to support a detailed argument.</li> </ul>		

### Question 2

Analyse how beliefs and values as well as **one or more** of the core elements have impacted at least **one (1)** key feature of an ancient society you have studied.

Include and assess evidence from both primary and secondary sources to support your argument.

CRITERION 7: assess the impact of human agency on an ancient society			Section C only								
D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discusses more than one individual in detail or an individual not from the prescribed list.</li> <li>Provides only a very general discussion of leadership or a society.</li> <li>Provides a narrative of known facts and events with limited or no links to the key concepts of the question i.e motives, historical context, success, historical depictions and judgments.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the influence of the historical context on an individual supported by general historical information.</li> <li>Uses limited evidence to speculate on at least one motive of an individual.</li> <li>Identifies at least one action or belief of an individual and how it shaped their society.</li> <li>Attempts to judge the individual's success.</li> <li>Refers to historical depictions and judgments.</li> <li>Response may lapse into narrative with little evidence of using historical information to address the question.</li> <li>There may be some factual errors.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explains the influence of the historical context on an individual supported by specific historical information.</li> <li>Uses logical evidence to speculate on at least one motive of an individual.</li> <li>Analyses significant actions or beliefs of an individual and how they shaped their society.</li> <li>Makes judgements of the individual's success.</li> <li>Discusses historical depictions and judgments.</li> <li>Few factual errors.</li> <li>Response includes information that is relevant to the key concepts in the question. There may be some narrative.</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyses the influence of historical context on an individual supported by specific, highly relevant historical information.</li> <li>Analyses key motives of an individual according to available evidence.</li> <li>Evaluates the success of an individual in shaping society in key ways by discussing historical depictions and judgments.</li> <li>Response consistently uses arguments that address elements of the question.</li> </ul>		

### Question 3

Evaluate the influence that both motivation and historical context had on **one (1)** individual who shaped an ancient society you have studied. Analyse the evidence for their success, including historical depictions and judgements of their actions.

Refer to both primary and secondary sources in your response.