

Cambridge International AS & A Level

CLASSICAL STUDIES**9274/33**

Paper 3 Classical History

October/November 2025

MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 50

Published

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 International will not enter into discussions about these mark schemes.

Cambridge International is publishing the mark schemes for the October/November 2025 series for most Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge International A and AS Level components, and some Cambridge O Level components.

This document consists of **11** printed pages.

Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptions for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Annotations guidance for centres

Examiners use a system of annotations as a shorthand for communicating their marking decisions to one another. Examiners are trained during the standardisation process on how and when to use annotations. The purpose of annotations is to inform the standardisation and monitoring processes and guide the supervising examiners when they are checking the work of examiners within their team. The meaning of annotations and how they are used is specific to each component and is understood by all examiners who mark the component.

We publish annotations in our mark schemes to help centres understand the annotations they may see on copies of scripts. Note that there may not be a direct correlation between the number of annotations on a script and the mark awarded. Similarly, the use of an annotation may not be an indication of the quality of the response.

The annotations listed below were available to examiners marking this component in this series.

Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	worthy of credit
	unclear
	omission
	to draw attention to something [and the extendable vertical line]
	irrelevant point
	blank page – this annotation is used on all blank pages within an answer booklet and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Use to show that you have seen an answer which is incorrect. Use to show that you have seen a plan.
	knowledge
	analysis/evaluation
	repetition
	narrative without addressing the question
	level one
	level two
	level three
	level four
	level five

20 mark source-based marking criteria

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is very detailed • Well-supported with evidence and examples where required • A very good understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough analysis of evidence/issues • Thoughtful evaluation that answers the question • Very thoughtful engagement with sources/task • Very well structured response with coherent and reasoned argument. 	11–12
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is detailed • Mostly supported with evidence and examples where required • A good understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	6–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis of evidence/ issues • Good evaluation that answers the question • Thoughtful engagement with sources/task • Well-structured response with reasoned argument. 	8–10
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An adequate range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is basic • Supported with some evidence and examples where required • Some understanding/awareness of context, as appropriate. 	4–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate analysis of evidence/issues • Adequate evaluation that answers the question • Some engagement with sources/task • A structured response with some reasoned argument. 	5–7
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of factual knowledge • Partially relevant knowledge is basic • Partially supported with evidence and examples where required • Limited understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	2–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited analysis of evidence/issues • Limited evaluation that partially answers the question • Limited engagement with sources/task • Poorly structured response with little reasoned argument. 	3–4
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very limited range of factual knowledge • Knowledge may not be relevant • Minimal or no supporting evidence or examples • Minimal or no understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superficial analysis of evidence/issues • Little or no evaluation that answers the question • Little or no engagement with sources/task • An unstructured response with little or no reasoned argument. 	1–2
Level 0	No creditable response.	0	No creditable response.	0

30 mark essay marking criteria

Level	AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Marks	AO2 Analysis and evaluation	Marks
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very good range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is very detailed • Well-supported with evidence and examples where required • A very good understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	11–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough analysis of evidence/issues • Thoughtful evaluation that answers the question • Very thoughtful engagement with sources/task • Very well structured response with coherent and reasoned argument. 	15–18
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is detailed • Mostly supported with evidence and examples where required • A good understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	8–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good analysis of evidence/ issues • Good evaluation that answers the question • Thoughtful engagement with sources/task • Well-structured response with reasoned argument. 	11–14
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An adequate range of factual knowledge • Relevant knowledge is basic • Supported with some evidence and examples where required • Some understanding/awareness of context, as appropriate. 	5–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate analysis of evidence/issues • Adequate evaluation that answers the question • Some engagement with sources/task • A structured response with some reasoned argument. 	7–10
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of factual knowledge • Partially relevant knowledge is basic • Partially supported with evidence and examples where required • Limited understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited analysis of evidence/issues • Limited evaluation that partially answers the question • Limited engagement with sources/task • Poorly structured response with little reasoned argument. 	4–6
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very limited range of factual knowledge • Knowledge may not be relevant • Minimal or no supporting evidence or examples • Minimal or no understanding/ awareness of context, as appropriate. 	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superficial analysis of evidence/issues • Little or no evaluation that answers the question • Little or no engagement with sources/task • An unstructured response with little or no reasoned argument. 	1–3
Level 0	No creditable response.	0	No creditable response.	0

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p>Using this passage as a starting point, discuss how far Pericles dominated politics in Athens during his career.</p> <p>Use the 20 mark source-based marking criteria. Candidates must make use of the passage but should also use other sources AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding – 8 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1.</p> <p>Answers might include some of the following points. In the passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pericles' control of the Assembly • 'because of his position': Pericles' long career as general and promoting radical democracy • 'the first citizen': what Thucydides means by this • 'he was under no necessity of flattering them': implied contrast with his successors such as Cleon <p>Other sources which might be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plutarch <i>Pericles</i> 6 (control passing to Pericles after the overthrow of Thucydides); 14 (securing funds for lavish building programme despite opposition; ostracism of rival Thucydides); 16 (domination of politics); 36–7 (recall to command due to inferiority of other generals) • Plutarch <i>Nicias</i> 3 (Pericles' superiority and eloquence) • Credit reference to Pericles' Funeral Oration previous to this passage • Aristotle <i>The Athenian Constitution</i> 27 (democratic measures), 28 (summary of Athenian leaders) • The Old Oligarch 1.3 (importance of elected generals) • Aristophanes <i>Acharnians</i> 510 ff (Pericles the Olympian etc) <p>AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Candidates should discuss Pericles' career, including his role as general and in the assembly; also his role in promoting radical democracy initially with Ephialtes, and later introducing demagogic measures of his own. Comparison can be made between Pericles and other earlier figures such as Thucydides and later figures such as Nicias and Cleon. How Aristophanes' comedies satirise his superiority and authority might also be discussed. Stronger answers might highlight the potential bias of sources such as Thucydides and The Old Oligarch in their attitude to democracy.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p>Assess the impact that the growth of Athenian imperialism had on other Greek states between the end of the Persian Wars and the start of the 2nd Peloponnesian War.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1</p> <p>Candidates might discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formation of the Delian League as a reaction to poor leadership from Pausanias • Athens' domination of the league • revolt of Naxos • consequences of battle of Eurymedon • consequences of the Helot revolt and 1st Peloponnesian War • transfer of treasury of the Delian League to Athens • the terms of the Thirty Year Peace • the revolt of Samos • events leading up to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War: Epidamnus, Corcyra, Potidaea, Megara • the Allied Congress at Sparta <p>Sources which might be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herodotus 8. 2–3, 49, 56–63, 74 • Thucydides <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> Book 1 passim • Aristophanes <i>Acharnians</i> 524–39, <i>Peace</i> 619–22, 639–48 • Diodorus <i>Library of History</i> 11.46, 11.50 • Plutarch <i>Aristides</i> 23, <i>Cimon</i> 11–13, <i>Pericles</i> 28, 30–31 • The Serpent Column • Chalcis decree <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation – 18 marks. Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Candidates should discuss how Athenian imperialism grew after the Persian Wars which ultimately caused both alienation from her own allies and war with her main rival Sparta. Expect candidates to discuss the creation of the Delian League and its gradual transition into an Athenian Empire, disagreements with Sparta leading to the 1st Peloponnesian War and causes of the outbreak of the 2nd Peloponnesian War. Stronger answers might note the limited non-Athenian sources, lack of detail in Thucydides from 479–31 and reliance on later authors.</p>	30

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p>‘Spartan women had greater status and influence than Athenian women’. To what extent do you agree with this statement?</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1</p> <p>Candidates should show knowledge of the main differences in the lives of Spartan and Athenian women, with Sparta’s main aim being to produce strong and healthy children. The differences in their marriage customs can be a particular focus. Candidates should outline what is known about Athenian women, their limited role in public life and the control exerted over them by men. Non-citizen women can be included.</p> <p>Sources which might be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xenophon <i>Constitution of the Spartans</i> 1 • Sayings of the Spartans: <i>Gorgo</i> 6 • Aristophanes <i>Women at the Thesmophoria</i> 786–99 (bad reputation of women) 830–42 (women of brave men deserving of respect); <i>Acharnians</i> 524–530 (satirical cause of the Peloponnesian War); <i>Lysistrata</i> 1271ff (reputation of Spartan women) • Aristotle <i>Constitution of the Athenians</i> 26 (Pericles’ law about citizenship) • Thucydides <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i> 2.46 (Pericles’ concluding comments about the duties of women in his Funeral speech) • Plutarch <i>Pericles</i> 30–32 (attacks on Aspasia) <p>Credit relevant knowledge without inclusion of a source.</p> <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation – 18 marks. Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Candidates may conclude that Spartan women had more freedom in their lives, were treated with greater respect by men and could gain a higher reputation for rearing a brave soldier. The limited sources we have for women’s lives in Athens tend to agree with Thucydides that ‘the greatest glory of a woman is to be least talked about by men’ which in itself makes assessment of women’s role difficult.</p> <p>Candidates should show awareness of the limitations of the existing sources e.g. Xenophon’s admiration towards the Spartan constitution despite his Athenian birth may lead to sensationalism and the tendency of Aristophanes to satirise and exaggerate for comic effect.</p>	30

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p>Using this passage as a starting point, discuss Nero’s treatment of his family.</p> <p>Use the 20 mark source-based marking criteria.</p> <p>Candidates must make use of the passage but should also use other sources</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and Understanding – 8 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1.</p> <p>Answers might include some of the following points about Nero. In the passage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hiding of true emotions • penchant for the dramatic • relationship with mother • anxiety and paranoia <p>Other sources which might be used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suetonius <i>Nero</i> 9 (honours to Claudius and praise of father at accession) • Suetonius <i>Nero</i> 33–5 (including insults of Claudius, poisoning of his rival Britannicus, murder of his aunt Domitia Lepida, and wives Octavia and Poppaea Sabina) • Tacitus <i>Annals</i>: 13. 14–15 (murder of Britannicus); 14. 3 (Nero seeks ways to free himself from his mother’s domination); 14. 60–64 (exile and murder of Octavia; influence of Poppaea); 16. 6 (death of Poppaea) • Dio Cassius 61.8 (removal of mother’s use of Praetorian Guard) <p>AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Candidates should discuss Nero’s relationship with his mother and the causes for her removal. Nero’s marital relationships also need evaluation, notably his cruel treatment of the innocent Octavia, his affair with the slave-woman Acte and the brief influence of Poppaea, his partner-in-crime.</p> <p>Candidates might wish to show what Nero’s treatment of his family reveals about his unstable personality.</p> <p>Accounts of Britannicus’s death in Suetonius, Tacitus and Dio could be compared.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p>How successfully did emperors deal with resistance to Roman rule in the provinces? In your answer you should discuss <u>at least two</u> of Claudius, Nero, Domitian and Trajan.</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1</p> <p>In their answers candidates should assess different methods used:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the use of the army for military force to deal with outbreaks of rebellion and conquest • governors/procurators: senatorial and equestrian • use of diplomacy in dealing with provincials and states, kingdoms and rulers on the borders • use of client kings within the Empire • Romanisation • spreading the imperial cult <p>The following sources might be discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claudius: conquest of Britain (Suetonius Claudius 17) • Nero: considered withdrawal from Britain; Boudicca's revolt (Tacitus <i>Agricola</i> 15–16, Suetonius <i>Nero</i> 18); Vindex the Gaul leads uprising of Gauls in order to promote Galba as the new emperor (Dio 63.22–23) • Domitian: wars v Dacia; further conquests of Britain under Agricola (Tacitus <i>Agricola</i> 29) Domitian's jealousy of Agricola's military success; calls for Agricola's recall after defeats in other provinces. (39–42). • Trajan: exchange of letters with governor Pliny; banning of political clubs in Bithynia (Pliny <i>Letters</i> 10. 33–4); wars (Dio 68.6,10,23,32); uprising in Judaea (68.32). <p>AO2 – Analysis and evaluation – 18 marks. Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Discussion and conclusions will depend on which sources candidates choose to discuss. Expect candidates to come to a judgement about the success of the means chosen for discussion. Candidates might assess to what extent success depended upon the emperors themselves as opposed to individual commanders and governors (e.g. Suetonius Paulinus and Agricola in Britain, Pliny in Bithynia).</p> <p>Credit can be given to evidence outside the specification e.g. Trajan's Column.</p> <p>Where relevant, candidates should discuss the reliability of the sources used in terms of their potential bias or prejudice and their time of writing.</p>	30

Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p>Assess the advantages and disadvantages for an ordinary Roman citizen living in Rome.</p> <p>Use the 30 mark essay marking criteria</p> <p>AO1 – Knowledge and understanding – 12 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO1</p> <p>In their answers candidates should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline the benefits for ordinary people living in Rome e.g. corn dole, free entertainments, new building works including aqueducts, patronage • outline the drawbacks of living in Rome: physical dangers from fire and other hazards, poverty, noise • accurate information without a source should be credited. <p>Sources which might be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suetonius, <i>Claudius</i> 18 (Claudius' recruitment of firefighters, measures to aid importation of corn after droughts) • 20 (building of new aqueducts) • 21 (new shows and ancient revivals including the Saecular games, Troy Games, a sea-fight on the Fucine Lake) • Suetonius, <i>Nero</i> 11, 22 (gifts scattered amongst the people during a variety of entertainments including plays, chariot-races in which he himself competed etc.) • Suetonius, <i>Domitian</i> 4–5 (entertainments in Colosseum and Circus, building programme) • Tacitus <i>Annals</i> 15. 38–45 (great fire of Rome, areas rebuilt with broader streets at Nero's expense, positive and negative aspects of Nero's reaction to and provision after the fire, profiteering from price of grain) • Juvenal <i>Satire</i> 3 (reasons for a poor citizen to leave Rome to go and live in Cumae - passim) • Pliny <i>Letters</i> 9.6 (the appeals of chariot-racing to ordinary people are revealed in Pliny's negative assessment) • Martial <i>Epigrams</i> 12.57 (noisy, foreign Rome) • Dio 67.4 (Domitian's provision of banquet and wine for the people) <p>AO2 – Analysis and Evaluation – 18 marks Marks should be awarded using the marking criteria for AO2.</p> <p>Candidates should consider the nature and bias of the sources used. For instance Juvenal as a satirist will be prone to exaggerate the ills of Rome and Martial as court poet might be over-flattering of the Emperor. Tacitus' bias against the emperors colours his work and Suetonius' focus as a biographer will differ from a scientific historian's. Candidates may argue that the benefits of living in Rome outweighed the disadvantages notwithstanding Juvenal's negative picture of the streets of Rome. Sources tend to focus on what Juvenal referred to as 'panem et circenses' but candidates may take a broader view of the benefits of Roman citizenship.</p> <p>Where relevant, candidates should discuss the reliability of the sources used in terms of their potential bias or prejudice and their time of writing.</p>	30