

Advanced Higher Classical Studies Course/Unit Support Notes



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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this document for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Advanced Higher Classical Studies Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units.

These support notes cover both the Advanced Higher Course and the Units in it.

The Advanced Higher Course/Unit Support Notes should be read in conjunction with the relevant:

Mandatory information:

- ◆ Course Specification
- ◆ Course Assessment Specification
- ◆ Unit Specifications

Assessment support:

- ◆ Specimen and Exemplar Question Papers and Marking Instructions
- ◆ Exemplar Question Paper Guidance
- ◆ Guidance on the use of past paper questions
- ◆ Coursework Information:
 - General assessment information
 - Coursework Assessment Task*
- ◆ Unit Assessment Support*

*These documents are for assessors and are confidential. Assessors may access these through the SQA Co-ordinator in their centres.

Related information

Advanced Higher Course Comparison

Further information on the Course/Units for Advanced Higher Classical Studies

This information begins on page 10 and both teachers and learners may find it helpful.

General guidance on the Course/ Units

Aims

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to enhance their awareness of the classical world. By making comparisons between Greek and Roman societies and the modern world learners will gain an understanding of the classical bases of many values, concepts and systems which underpin our modern society. Through this understanding they will have an opportunity to appreciate the extent to which the attitudes and values of the contemporary world have evolved.

The Course makes a distinctive contribution to the curriculum by drawing on aspects of history, languages, philosophy and literature, and applying these to an understanding of how religious, political, social, moral and cultural aspects of the classical world continue to have a significant impact on human identity today. It thereby adopts a multidisciplinary approach.

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ degree courses in social subjects and social sciences or related areas
- ◆ a diverse range of careers

For many learners a key transition point will be to further or higher education, for example to Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) or degree programmes. Examples of further and higher education programmes that learners might progress to are: Classics, History, Theology, Archaeology, Philosophy, Ancient History or other related areas.

This Course provides good preparation for learners progressing to further and higher education because learners doing Advanced Higher Courses must be able to work with a degree of independence. Advanced Higher Courses may also allow 'advanced standing' or partial credit towards the first year of study of a degree programme.

This Advanced Higher is part of the Scottish Baccalaureate in Social Sciences. The Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science and Social Sciences consist of coherent groups of subjects at Higher and Advanced Higher level. Each award consists of two Advanced Highers, one Higher and an Interdisciplinary Project.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

The development of subject-specific and generic skills is central to the Course. Learners should be made aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of them. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness.

The skills, knowledge and understanding that will be developed in the Advanced Higher Classical Studies Course are:

Skills

- evaluating, analysing and synthesising evidence from a wide range of sources
- structuring and sustaining detailed lines of argument
- evaluating some of the religious, political, social, moral or cultural aspects of ancient Greek and Roman civilisation
- comparing and contrasting classical Greek and Roman societies with each other and with the contemporary world
- justifying appropriate research issues
- planning a programme of research
- researching, collecting and recording information
- explaining approaches to organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate referencing conventions

Knowledge and understanding

- ◆ an in-depth knowledge and understanding of classical sources
- ◆ an in-depth knowledge and understanding of universal human themes and values which have a continuing impact on contemporary society

Approaches to learning and teaching

At Advanced Higher level learners will begin to develop the ability to work independently. Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to use an enquiring, critical and problem-solving approach to their learning. Learners should also be given the opportunity to practise and develop research and investigation skills and higher order evaluation and analytical skills. Some of the approaches to learning and teaching suggested for other levels (in particular, Higher) may also apply at Advanced Higher level.

Learners should engage in a variety of learning activities as appropriate to the subject. These may include, for example:

- ◆ researching information rather than receiving information from their teacher or lecturer
- ◆ using case studies
- ◆ engaging in independent reading
- ◆ recording the results of research from different sources
- ◆ presenting findings/conclusions to a group
- ◆ participating in group work with peers and using collaborative learning opportunities to develop team-working
- ◆ participating in informed debate and discussion
- ◆ drawing conclusions from complex information
- ◆ participating in field trips and visits

Teachers and lecturers should support learners by having regular discussions with them and giving regular feedback. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers and lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning, and enable learners to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching. The flexibility in Advanced Higher Courses and the independence with which learners carry out the work lend themselves to this. Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners.

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The following skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work should be developed in this Course.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure that learners have opportunities to develop these skills as an integral part of their learning experience.

It is important that learners are aware of the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that they are developing in the Course and the activities they are involved in that provide realistic opportunities to practise and/or improve them.

Reading

Throughout the Course and while undertaking the project, learners will have the opportunity to develop reading skills. They will read a variety of texts, including classical literature, history writing, online articles, academic journals etc. They will also learn to express reasoned views about the issues they study, develop the ability to read critically, and evaluate the ideas contained in written sources.

Writing

The Course will provide considerable opportunities to develop writing skills within the Units. Learners should be encouraged to undertake extended writing where appropriate. For example, the requirement to write detailed, well-informed and well-reasoned arguments provides an ideal opportunity for learners to develop the skill of extended writing.

Personal learning

The Course, and in particular the project-dissertation will provide extensive opportunities for learners to undertake individually-led work including researching/investigating, producing written work, reflecting on what they have learned, revising, etc.

Citizenship

Issues of citizenship permeate the Course. The Course allows learners to deal extensively with universal ideas, themes and values which link the classical and modern worlds, and to develop a depth of understanding and appreciation for a variety of beliefs and world views. The two very different societies of classical Greece and the classical Roman world will be examined and compared with each other and with the modern world. Through this, learners will be helped to develop an understanding of their own attitudes and values, and learn to appreciate the extent to which these may differ from those of other people at other times.

Applying, analysing and evaluating

At Advanced Higher level the focus is on depth of knowledge and understanding, and the opportunity for detailed and theoretical study of classical societies. This enables learners to explore challenging abstract ideas by engaging with a wide range of source material, and by both evaluating and synthesising information.

This depth of study affords them a unique opportunity of intellectual engagement with the subject matter.

This Course will allow learners to use different sources of information including academic literature, primary sources, artefacts, etc. Any piece of information, or source, is capable of yielding more or less relevant input to a study, depending on the skills of the learner. However, teachers/lecturers should direct learners to more complex, and potentially richer sources of information.

The project-dissertation

Completing the Advanced Higher Classical Studies project-dissertation will provide opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Learners will have the opportunity to develop their reading and writing skills as they research their topic and present findings. They will develop personal learning as they work independently to identify and refine a topic or issue, and carry out research. They will develop citizenship through deepening their understanding of the classical world. This Course provides opportunities to develop the skill of synthesising information. The project in particular will provide opportunities for learners to develop their skills in this area.

There may also be opportunities for other, additional skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work to be developed in the Course. For example, the use of debating, discussion groups or visits could develop skills of listening and talking. However, this could vary across centres depending on approaches being used to deliver the Course in a centre and this is for centres to manage.

Approaches to assessment

There are different approaches to assessment, and teachers and lecturers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as their understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate approaches and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

Unit assessment

Information about Unit assessment is found within Unit Specifications and Unit assessment support packs.

The purpose of unit assessment is to ensure that learners have achieved a minimum level of competence in the skills knowledge and understanding required in Advanced Higher Classical Studies.

Teachers and lecturers preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like.

Flexibility in the method of assessment provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate competence in a variety of ways and so reduce barriers to attainment.

Teachers and lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a Unit, or Units, either in full or partially.

Course assessment

Information about course assessment is found in the Course Specification, the Course Assessment Specification, the Specimen Question paper, the Assessment Task and the Coursework (Task and General Information) documents.

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess the added value of challenge and application. This is done through the Question paper in which candidates will apply their knowledge of the mandatory content. The project-dissertation will assess the challenge of going deeper into one area and applying skills of research and presenting findings.

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and, towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Examples of activities which may help learners prepare for course assessment could include:

- ◆ reviewing Specimen/Exemplar Question Papers and/or Coursework documents
- ◆ practising question paper techniques
- ◆ revising for the question paper
- ◆ discussing requirements for the project
- ◆ clarifying the amount of support learners can expect

Authenticity

Teachers/lecturers are responsible for ensuring that evidence presented for course assessment is the learner's own work. There are a number of techniques and strategies to ensure that learners present work that is their own. Teachers and lecturers should put in place mechanisms to authenticate learner evidence.

For example:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with learners
- ◆ short personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ learner notes from their independent reading

Group work approaches are acceptable as part of learning and teaching preparation for assessment.

For more information, please refer to SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course/Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Further information on the Course/Units

The *Course Specification*, *Unit Specifications* and *Course Assessment Specification* documents give an overview of the Course, and it may be helpful for learners to read these.

Question Paper

Detailed support about the Question Paper, is given in the Specimen Question Paper and accompanying Marking Instructions documents. The Specimen Question Paper gives an indication of question types to be found in future Question Papers. The Marking Instructions document gives General Marking Principles mark allocations, marking criteria and detailed Marking Instructions.

For detailed support and guidance on the project-dissertation, please refer to the Classical Studies project-dissertation assessment task and the Classical Studies project-dissertation general assessment information documents. The assessment task document contains a detailed guide for candidates as well as General Marking Principles, mark allocations, marking criteria and Detailed Marking Instructions.

The table below provides illustration of mandatory content for the Advanced Higher Classical Studies Question Paper. It is intended to provide additional guidance on potential areas of teaching and learning. This expression of mandatory content is originally provided in the *Course Assessment Specification*.

Teachers and lecturers should note that the column on the left describes mandatory content for Course assessment. The column on the right describes examples of how this content might be covered, and is intended as guidance only.

| Mandatory content for Course assessment | Examples of coverage |
|---|---|
| Section 1: History and historiography | |
| <p>Learners should use the following texts to examine the role of history writing and the aims and methods of writers of history in the classical world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Herodotus, Books 1 and 7 ◆ Thucydides, Books 1, 4, 7 and , 8 ◆ Polybius, Book 3 ◆ Livy, <i>Praefatio</i> and Book 1 ◆ Tacitus, <i>Annals</i>, Books 1 and 14 | <p>It may be helpful to approach this content via a comparative study examining how different historians' writings illustrate the aspects mentioned opposite, and what this reveals about Greek and Roman societies. Within each text it may be helpful to focus on the following points:</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>In studying these texts, learners should consider the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ attitudes to evidence ◆ selection and arrangement of material, including the use of set speeches ◆ the relationship of myth and legend to history ◆ uses of history, eg as a moral example, or as a political argument ◆ the consequences of historical bias and causation | <p>Herodotus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Persian Wars focusing on Thermopylae <p>Thucydides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Peloponnesian War focusing on the Sicilian Expedition <p>Polybius</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hannibal's invasion of Italy in Second Punic War <p>Livy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Legendary History of Rome's Kings (Book 1); Hannibal's invasion of Italy in the Second Punic War (covering the same history as Polybius Book 3) <p>Tacitus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The beginnings of Nero's madness and the start of terror |
| <p>Mandatory content for Course assessment</p> <p>Section 2: Individual and community</p> | <p>Examples of coverage</p> |
| <p>Learners should use the following texts to examine ideas expressed in the classical world concerning the individual and community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Plato: <i>The Republic</i>, Books 1-5 ◆ Aristotle: <i>Politics</i> ◆ Cicero: <i>De Officiis</i> (On Duties) <p>In studying these texts, learners should consider the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the organisation of the community and the place of the individual within it ◆ the relationship of the weak and the powerful ◆ the moral obligations of the individual in society ◆ the necessity for social organisation | <p>It may be helpful to approach this content via a comparative study examining how Plato, Aristotle and Cicero approach the aspects mentioned opposite, including similarities and differences in what they advocate and the contrast between their ideas and modern ideas such as rights, equalities or modern democracy. Within each text it may be helpful to focus on the following points:</p> <p>Aristotle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Relationship between the individual and the state — the political community compared with the household |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Human behaviour, citizenship ◆ Constitutional government, democracy, tyranny <p>Cicero</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Obligations of the individual ◆ Honour and expedience ◆ Perceived conflict between these ◆ Experience as a politician <p>Plato</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Eutopia ◆ Questioning the nature of justice and injustice ◆ Virtue ◆ Education of guardians ◆ Equality of the sexes ◆ The ideal republic — philosopher kings |
| <p>Mandatory content for Course assessment</p> <p>Section 3: Heroes and heroism</p> | <p>Examples of coverage</p> |
| <p>Learners should use the following texts to consider the qualities which characterise heroism in the classical world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Homer: <i>Iliad</i>, Books 1, 6, 22, 24 ◆ Homer: <i>Odyssey</i>, Books 1, 5, 6, 22 ◆ Euripides: <i>Trojan Women</i> ◆ Virgil: <i>Aeneid</i>, Books 1, 2, 4, 12 ◆ Ovid: <i>Heroides</i>, 1,3,7 <p>In studying these texts, learners should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ morality and the hero ◆ the changing nature of heroism ◆ Greek and Roman views of heroism ◆ the hero as role-model ◆ the hero and women ◆ heroes and anti-heroes | <p>It may be helpful to approach this content via a study of the main characters, action and themes in each of the extracts listed opposite, with the aim of understanding the various ways they exemplify the themes listed, and the contrast between these and with the modern world. Within each text it may be helpful to focus on the following points:</p> <p>The Iliad</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Homeric hero ◆ Conflict and violence ◆ Conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles ◆ Hector and his family ◆ Duel between Achilles and Hector ◆ The retrieval of Hector's corpse and subsequent mourning |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conflict between the gods and the actions of the gods amongst humans <p>Odyssey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conflict between Poseidon and the other gods ◆ Odysseus's cunning and calculation ◆ Odysseus' situation on Ogygia, the suitors overrun his house ◆ Odysseus shipwreck after leaving Calypso, help from Nausicaa ◆ Athena's intervention with Telemachus ◆ Odysseus' return, the rout of the suitors and punishment of the servants <p>Trojan women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consequences of war ◆ Relationships between men and women ◆ Cassandra's plight ◆ Punishment and suffering of the Trojan women ◆ Role of the gods <p>Aeneid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Roman epic ◆ Love and duty ◆ Aeneas's arrival in Carthage, his recounting of the fall of Troy ◆ Aeneas and Dido's affair ◆ Duel between Aeneas and Turnus ◆ Roles of the gods, mortals and fate <p>Heroides</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The hero from a woman's perspective ◆ Penelope's letter to Odysseus ◆ Briseis' letter to Achilles ◆ Dido's letter to Aeneas |
|--|--|

| Mandatory content for Course assessment | Examples of coverage |
|--|---|
| <p>Section 4: Comedy, satire and society</p> <p>Learners should use the following texts to study the nature and limitations of the commentary on society provided by Athenian Old Comedy and Roman Satire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Aristophanes: <i>Acharnians, Knights, Clouds, Peace, Assembly Women</i> ◆ Horace: Satires, Book 1 (except 7 and 8) and Book 2 (except 1 and 3) ◆ Juvenal: Satires 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 <p>In studying these texts, learners should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ literary conventions of comedy and satire ◆ politics and war ◆ social and political ambition and the corruption of relationships ◆ plain living versus luxury ◆ relationships and changing values between the sexes ◆ quest for peace of mind | <p>It may be helpful to approach this content via a comparative study of the commentary on society provided by each writer/text. The texts shown could be examined to demonstrate how the themes were tackled and what this tells us about the writers' concerns and issues within Greek and Roman societies. When examining the works of each writer it may be helpful to focus on the following points:</p> <p>Aristophanes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Entertainment and satire ◆ Comment on the Peloponnesian war ◆ Satire of Cleon ◆ New philosophical and educational ideas ◆ Women taking over Athens ◆ Greed and corruption ◆ Plain living <p>Horace</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Entertainment and comment on vices ◆ Greed, gluttony and excess ◆ Comment on philosophers ◆ The nature of true happiness <p>Juvenal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Humour and pathos ◆ Corruption ◆ Moral decadence ◆ Dishonesty and hypocrisy ◆ Views on women |

Project-dissertation

This section provides guidance for teachers supporting learners' research within the project-dissertation. It should be read in conjunction with the Coursework General and Task documents and the *Researching Classical Issues* Advanced Higher Unit assessment support pack

The project-dissertation is one component of Course assessment. The aim of the project-dissertation is to assess research skills. While the Researching Unit has its own value as a 'standalone' qualification, it can be used to develop learners' skills as they work through their research project towards producing their dissertation. For information on the Assessment Standards for the Researching Unit, teachers/lecturers should refer to the *Researching Classical Studies* Unit Specification document and the *Researching Classical Studies* Unit assessment support pack.

Learners should identify an appropriate area of study and agree this with the teacher/lecturer. Careful consideration should be given to selecting an issue which the learner finds sufficiently interesting and challenging to spend a considerable amount of time researching in depth. In making this choice, learners should also consider the availability of resources, which may vary from centre to centre.

An appropriate issue for study within the project-dissertation will be one that requires analysis and qualitative judgement, rather than a descriptive and narrative approach. The issue may be worded as a question, statement, or a description of the area of study and should be such that the learner is challenged to provide a convincing overall conclusion to the issue(s) raised. It is likely that a suitable issue will give rise to a number of subsidiary questions, or sub-issues, which will need to be considered in order to reach an overall conclusion providing a robust synthesis and a qualitative judgement. An appropriate complex issue is also one which will enable the learner to interrogate differing perspectives or points of view. In some areas this may encompass significant debate — including major differences in the interpretation of developments within the classical world, or different perspectives on the impact or significance of different historical events.

Issues which invite evaluation, analysis and synthesis may be approached in one of the following ways, although such approaches are not mandatory.

- ◆ How successful is/was/are...?
- ◆ To what extent can/do/should...?
- ◆ How far can/do/should...?
- ◆ How justified is the view...?
- ◆ A comparative analysis of... and ...
- ◆ How important is...?

When an issue/question has been chosen by the learner, it may be helpful for a discussion to take place between the learner and the teacher/lecturer regarding

the scope of the project, with some initial discussion of the possible sub-issues which the learner will need to consider. At this stage there should also be some consideration of the availability of relevant resources.

This might involve, for example, reading further primary sources, examining archaeological remains, reading online chapters or articles from journals or other similar sources. Teachers and lecturers may need to help learners identify suitable background reading at this early stage, as well as establishing a time-frame for completion.

Making decisions about the way in which the chosen issue will be tackled

Care should be taken to ensure that a sensible range of factors/views/outcomes is considered, and that concentration on an isolated factor/view/outcome does not exclude consideration of alternative explanations. The individual learner may find it helpful to mind-map possible issues at this stage. Alternatively, an individual presentation could be made to peers, followed by a brainstorming session during which other learners contribute possible alternative approaches/interpretations.

To ensure that the approach taken is sufficiently in-depth, it may be useful to include no more than three or four main issues in the final plan. This may mean conflating some smaller issues into a single overarching issue, or justifying the exclusion of some relatively minor issues. Mind mapping can prove a useful tool in suggesting how subsidiary issues relate to each other and to the overall chosen issue. Learners should be encouraged to be discerning about which information they choose to include and their critical thinking skills can be shown by explaining why they are using or rejecting particular points.

Good planning is essential to researching the chosen issue as it provides a structured focus for collecting information. However, modification of the plan may be necessary, for example if new evidence emerges, or the learner wishes to change the focus of their research. This should be seen as an integral part of planning a programme of research and learners should be encouraged to recognise that this need to amend elements of the original plan is a valid aspect of almost all independent research.

Identifying a suitable range of resources

Researching classical issues at this level should involve a wide range of academic reading and it is therefore important that the learner plans ahead to ensure that the resources they need are available when they need them. The starting point is likely to be resources held within the department but school and public libraries may also be able to help with accessing resources. Some university libraries provide reference facilities to final-year school learners.

Sources might include online journals/papers, newspaper or press articles or press releases and blogs.

For some issues there are published works and learners may need teacher/lecturer guidance to help them select appropriate reading. Learners may

also need help to distinguish between school textbooks (or books written for the general reader) and those written by academics with specialist knowledge of the issue. A good range of academic work should be consulted and learners should be able to recognise that different approaches and perspectives on classical themes and events may involve subtly different interpretations of events or ideas and will require careful reading.

Different subject disciplines use different research methods to create new knowledge and learners should be aware of some of these differences, for example the differences between qualitative and quantitative data. Research methodology shapes thinking so this will help learners to 'think like' or 'think within' this particular subject discipline. This will help learners become competent, critical users of information.

Agreeing key deadline dates for the completion of the different stages involved in researching the issue

Many learners will find the process of researching independently a challenge. Therefore it may be helpful for the teacher/lecturer and learner to agree dates at which progress will be reviewed. Key dates might include:

- ◆ selection of an issue
- ◆ completion of a plan
- ◆ reviews/discussion of the collecting and recording evidence

Where this Unit is being taken as part of the Advanced Higher Classical Studies Course, the planning could also take account of:

- ◆ submission date for a first draft of the project-dissertation
- ◆ submission date for the final version of the project-dissertation, possibly a few days before the SQA deadline date

The learner could keep copies of planning notes, a written plan, a mind-map, discussion notes or a recording of a discussion or interview. The checklist provided suggests one way of recording when progress checks have taken place.

Some learners will find it helpful to focus research on one aspect of the chosen issue at a time, rather than attempting to research, collect and record information relating to the whole issue at the same time. For example, where the chosen issue involves an isolated factor, the learner may choose to start with research focused on this aspect of the issue. Researching one aspect at a time can help to break the task up into more manageable sections and facilitates periodic reviews of progress. A progress review sheet could be used to support this process.

Once a starting point has been identified, the learner will decide how best to record information gathered. For many, word-processed or hand written note-making will be the most straightforward way of proceeding. Although many learners will have had some prior experience of collecting and recording information, it is worth emphasising that it is good practice to:

- ◆ use the list of contents/index to identify sections relevant to the issue being studied
- ◆ skim read to identify the most important and relevant material
- ◆ be aware that many academics summarise their arguments at the end of a section or chapter. Alternatively, their views may be outlined in the introduction or in the conclusion to the book or article

Learners could complete a simple task like the one provided below to become familiar with different sources of information and bibliographic format. Teachers/lecturers could produce a short guide to conducting research and observing ethical standards in research to help learners realise the importance of acknowledging sources and/or using sensitive information.

Collecting and recording information

There is no single approved way of collecting and recording information but the following advice may prove useful.

- ◆ Always note the author and title of the book/article being consulted. If a published work, the date of publication should also be recorded.
- ◆ If the information is from an online source, note the URL and the date when accessed.
- ◆ Summarise relevant factual evidence briefly, noting page references. By summarising, rather than quoting directly, learners will both save themselves time and avoid unintended plagiarism. Similarly, there is no need to write in sentences and abbreviations can speed up the note making process, although it is important that the learner him/herself can subsequently make sense of the notes taken.
- ◆ Record statements of the author's views by using phrases such as 'According to Singer, "...". The recording of **brief** direct quotations may be helpful but these should be limited to a few words or phrases. Lengthy quotations are unhelpful. Page references for views/quotations should be noted to facilitate footnoting at a later stage.

Academics often refer to the views/evidence cited by other academics. Noting references to these may help learners understand more about different academic interpretations, and aid the development of a convincing personal line of argument at a later stage.

Checks on progress could take the form of a discussion between teacher/lecturer and learner; peer-review; or individual presentation to the group. In any discussion of progress made, it may be helpful for the teacher/lecturer to make sure that the learner is using evidence analytically and that a line of argument is emerging.

A copy of the learner's notes could be used as evidence contributing to Assessment Standard 1.3 of the *Researching Classical Issues* Unit.

Note taking/using sources

The project-dissertation will involve the learner considering a range of information to identify patterns, themes, trends, exceptions and so on. Pictures, archaeological artefacts, coins, maps, tables of statistics and written sources may all be relevant and learners can be encouraged to look closely and to pick out what is relevant to their chosen issue. It is important that, having analysed the information and identified the viewpoints presented in the sources, learners take a critical view of the details they have collected. This will include evaluating the validity of the information presented and a judgement on the interpretative perspective of the sources, where relevant.

When using and reviewing sources, it may be helpful to remind learners to take the following points into account:

- ◆ Consider first of all the **author**, what is the author's level of expertise — how much did/does he or she know about the issue?
- ◆ **Bias**, or point of view, does need to be borne in mind. But it should not be assumed unless the words of the source do actually show bias.
- ◆ The **purpose** of the source is as important when it comes to assessing reliability. Is it to persuade, to inform, to develop, to reject? Who are/were the intended readers/viewers?
- ◆ The **date** of a source might also be relevant as is the **context** in which it was written.

One more test of the value of a source is the extent to which it is supported or contradicted by other sources. Sources can be thought of as pieces of jigsaw; they are much more valuable in building up a complete picture if they can be fitted in with other sources. Learners should be actively encouraged to use sources to develop and support their arguments. Learners should be encouraged to see that this will strengthen their lines of argument, and to appreciate that proper referencing of sources helps the learner avoid plagiarism. Identifying sources will also help the reader to see the range of sources used.

Learners should be encouraged to evaluate academic writing critically, and use their own understanding and critical thinking skills to interrogate the sources they use. Learners should be helped to realise that knowledge is usually subjective and that, within the social subjects, 'truth' is often influenced by context, perception and circumstances, etc.

These questions can help to make judgements about a source and help develop skills of critical analysis.

1. How relevant is the source to my question or issue?
2. What is the evidence used in this source to support this conclusion?
3. Which of these bits of evidence does this source regard as decisive?
4. Is it justifiable to draw the conclusion from the evidence as this source does?

5. Does this source give less weight to, or ignore altogether, other pieces of evidence that have a bearing on the issue?
6. How does this argument compare with the rival arguments of other sources, which have been similarly evaluated?

Any source should always be carefully evaluated. Learners may find it useful to apply the following questions when reading sources:

1. Is the author a serious and respected scholar?
2. Is the publisher/website politically neutral or is it linked to or sponsored by some political cause?
3. If a website, is it managed by some responsible academic institution — typically a university or a national archive?
4. Does the work include any apparatus of scholarship (references, footnotes, bibliography)?
5. Does the design of the website or publication suggest that the digital special effects are more important than the words on the screen?

The following exercise might be useful in helping develop these skills:

The teacher/lecturer could issue a text and ask learners to identify the main line of reasoning used. The learners could critically evaluate that line of reasoning by highlighting statements which prove the argument or undermine it. Learners could also be asked to identify any sub-text or relevant information which is missing that might lead the reader to an alternative conclusion. Learners could discuss how reliable the sources are in the text and whether the data is up-to-date. The teacher/lecturer could ask if the learner comes to the same conclusions as the writer.

Organising and referencing

A key issue in communicating the ideas synthesised from the research is to be able to structure the findings appropriately. This will normally involve laying out various sub-issues relevant to the question in a logical manner which develops a clear line of argument and leads to a conclusion which can be supported.

This may mean going into detail on the various areas. These might well include:

- ◆ matters of precise definition that arise from the issue
- ◆ alternative interpretations that have been produced by different academics or academic traditions
- ◆ detailed analysis of particular pieces of evidence that have a substantial bearing on the issue
- ◆ a wide-ranging consideration of all aspects of the issue

It may be appropriate for learners to use sub-sections to keep their material under control. These sub-sections will normally arise from the sub-issues identified at the planning stage, but are not a requirement. Successful use of sub-sections will normally depend on the following:

- ◆ keeping sections to an appropriate number
- ◆ sub-sections that are linked together coherently

Formal language and tone is encouraged. For example, instead of learners using phrases like, 'I think that...', it may be more appropriate for learners to express themselves in a more academic way, for example, 'this evidence is used to support and elaborate on...'

Presenting

It is also important to develop skills in the appropriate conventions when making an academic presentation.

- ◆ A dissertation requires use of controlled language. Learners should aim to develop the skill of presenting an argument or making a point thoughtfully and clearly.
- ◆ Main text should be clear and uncluttered.
- ◆ Learners should make sure they are aware of any requirements for presenting their findings. These may include page numbering and including word counts.
- ◆ Footnotes should contain supplementary information only. They are not part of the body of the dissertation.
- ◆ Text contained in diagrams may be smaller or larger but must be legible.

Referencing

Learners should understand how to use appropriate referencing conventions. Learners should be accurate in their references

- ◆ All quotations should be referenced as a matter of course.
- ◆ Specific facts such as statistics should usually be referenced unless they are the common currency of all books on the subject.
- ◆ If a paragraph is based in its entirety on one book, then that should be referenced, even if there is no direct quotation.

The style of referencing can be the straightforward one of: Author, Date, *Title*, page number.

Example: Gillespie, R. (2011) *Critical Navigation Skills*, p93.

Learners may use the conventions of *ibid* and *op cit* as appropriate.

Research findings should be accompanied by a bibliography. As with references, learning how to construct and present a proper bibliography is part of the development provided by this Unit. The bibliography should be a genuine note of all works used. It is important that the author's name and the title are entered correctly. The date and publisher should also be included.

Most university websites have advice on setting out a bibliography. Learners should be consistent in the format they choose to use and which is most appropriate for their area of research.

Websites should also be recorded in the bibliography. Web addresses should be listed, with the dates at which they were accessed. This is done because websites are subject to frequent alteration.

Checklist

Below is a checklist which may be of use to centres and learners in tracking progress.

Learner's name _____

| Research activity | Notes | Date completed |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Key dates agreed and issued | | |
| Proposed issue | | |
| Discussion/negotiation on issue | | |
| Issue finalised and agreed | | |
| Planning a programme of research | Agreed plan attached | |
| Agreed amendments to the plan (if any) | | |
| Initial sources | | |
| Review of progress (1) including evaluation and analysis of evidence so far | | |
| Review of progress (2) | | |

Literature review — using a matrix

This table shows a potential way of approaching a literature review. The text under each heading is an illustrative example of the issues that may be identified within a review of a particular piece of literature.

| Study | Aim of study OR research question | Methodology and methods | Results | Main themes or points emerging | Main conclusion Any limitations? | Any future research suggested? |
|-----------------|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| Author 1 | To investigate factors which... | Group reading and discussion | Results limited to discussion transcripts Quotations used to illustrate points made | Factors impacting are... | To increase participation in... | Follow up on x y z via further reading of secondary sources Could extend to... |
| Author 2 | To explore the themes of... | Close reading of the text and explanatory criticism | Themes of x, y and z illustrated clearly | To encourage... Consider choice in... | X theme is less important than y and z | Follow-up thinking needed on relative approach to theme y in the Roman and modern worlds |

Appendix 1 Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment](#)
- ◆ [Course Specification](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)

Administrative information

Published: May 2015 (version 2.0)

History of changes to Advanced Higher Course/Unit Support Notes

| Course details | Version | Description of change | Authorised by | Date |
|----------------|---------|---|------------------------------------|----------|
| | 2.0 | Extensive changes to reflect revisions to mandatory documents, including changes in the following sections: 'Aims', 'Progression', 'Approaches to assessment', 'Unit assessment'. | Qualifications Development Manager | May 2015 |
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