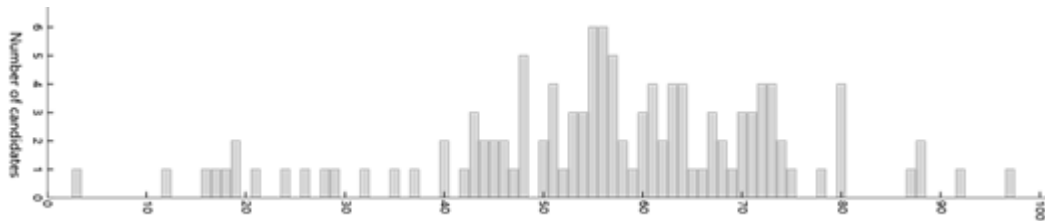




Summary report of the 2021 ATAR course examination report: Ancient History

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2021	118	1
2020	122	2
2019	138	4
2018	133	3

Examination score distribution



Summary

Egypt

Attempted by 29 candidates Mean 56.38% Max 73.42% Min 36.54%

Greece

Attempted by 56 candidates Mean 59.14% Max 91.58% Min 2.60%

Rome

Attempted by 33 candidates Mean 50.27% Max 86.75% Min 15.79%

The current structure of the examination has been in place for three years. It is clear this year that candidates were more familiar with the requirements of each section, specifically the source analysis and short answer sections, which both underwent some change in 2019.

Section means were:

Section One: Short answer – Unit 3

Egypt

Mean 59.77%

Attempted by 29 candidates

Mean 14.94(/25)

Max 22.92

Min 10.42

Greece

Mean 63.99%

Attempted by 56 candidates

Mean 16.00(/25)

Max 23.96

Min 2.60

Rome

Mean 52.08%

Attempted by 33 candidates

Mean 13.02(/25)

Max 21.88

Min 6.77

Section Two: Source analysis – Unit 4

Egypt

Mean 57.41%

Attempted by 29 candidates

Mean 14.35(/25)

Max 22.50

Min 9.38

Greece

Mean 56.07%

Attempted by 55 candidates

Mean 14.02(/25)

Max 23.12

Min 0.00

Rome

Mean 48.64%

Attempted by 32 candidates

Mean 12.16(/25)

Max 21.88

Min 0.00

Section Three: Essay

Part A: Unit 3

Egypt	Mean 51.79%		
Attempted by 29 candidates	Mean 12.95(/25)	Max 19.00	Min 7.00
Greece	Mean 59.79%		
Attempted by 54 candidates	Mean 14.95(/25)	Max 24.00	Min 0.00
Rome	Mean 52.00%		
Attempted by 31 candidates	Mean 13.00(/25)	Max 24.00	Min 0.00

Part B: Unit 4

Egypt	Mean 56.55%		
Attempted by 29 candidates	Mean 14.14(/25)	Max 18.00	Min 2.50
Greece	Mean 56.71%		
Attempted by 52 candidates	Mean 14.18(/25)	Max 24.00	Min 0.00
Rome	Mean 48.36%		
Attempted by 31 candidates	Mean 12.09(/25)	Max 19.00	Min 0.00

General comments

Candidates demonstrated fair knowledge of the syllabus and assessment type requirements. Essay responses demonstrated less evidence of candidates' trying to write a preprepared essay, resulting in some better responses to questions. There was parity in the top responses across the three contexts. However, an increased number of candidates provided simplistic responses to questions demanding higher-order thinking skills. Contextual understanding was adequate but a smaller number of candidates than in previous years demonstrated understanding of context. Responses to Unit 3 essays were less successful than in previous years.

Advice for candidates

- Having detailed knowledge of the historical context from the period of study is a vital component of doing well in this examination. Many marks can be accumulated by being able to use relevant detailed evidence effectively from the historical context to support responses.
- Pay close attention to the instructional words in questions and address them all. For example, where a question is scaffolded (i.e., explain ... and evaluate ...) it is imperative that an attempt is made to address all the instructional words.
- Choose an argument, and evidence to support it, carefully. Successful answers are those that structure a response thoughtfully.
- Source analysis allows candidates to demonstrate understanding of historiography and higher-order thinking skills. Recognise that sources represent an opportunity for debate (and thereby, for analysis). You need to construct an argument to demonstrate your analytical skills. Simply agreeing with the ideas/message of the source, and then providing a simple description of how the source is 'accurate' or 'useful' or 'valid', does not meet the requirement of a good answer because it uses limited analysis skills.

Advice for teachers

- Continue to teach paragraph and essay writing and structure. Writing effective paragraphs will elicit stronger and more efficient responses across the paper.
- Teach how to formulate and construct a written argument. Many questions in the examination required candidates to evaluate/assess and/or analyse. Higher-order thinking can be demonstrated more effectively if written arguments are well constructed.
- Be aware that key individuals in the syllabus can be assessed in the short answer and essay sections that form the Unit 3 component of the examination.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Short answer – Unit 3 (24 Marks)

Many candidates dealt well with this section. The questions were accessible and linked to the syllabus. In the Egypt short answers, there was less effective use of evidence and detail in responses.

Section Two: Source analysis – Unit 4 (20 Marks)

Sources were chosen for their ability to allow candidates to demonstrate their analysis skills. While there was a decrease in the mean for this section, many more candidates presented well-structured responses indicating more familiarity with the requirements of this section of the examination following its change in 2019.

Section Three: Essay

Part A: Unit 3 (25 Marks)

Understanding of the Unit 3 syllabus was evident in responses. Coherent narrative was common, but many responses avoided evaluation and/or analysis resulting in many essays being superficial recount or simple narrative. Essays were often short, failing to expand and/or demonstrate understanding effectively.

Part B: Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Performance in the essay section of Unit 4 was largely consistent with the performance seen in Unit 3 essays.

EGYPT

Section One: Short answer (24 Marks)

New Kingdom Egypt to the death of Horemheb

The mean was lower on many questions than in previous years. Lower-order responses dominated, though there was still some excellent understanding demonstrated.

Section Two: Source analysis – Unit 4 (20 Marks)

Thebes – East and West, New Kingdom Egypt

The mean was lower on many questions than in previous years. Less confident analysis skills were evident, though there was still some excellent understanding demonstrated.

Section Three: Essay

Part A: Unit 3 (25 Marks)

New Kingdom Egypt to the death of Horemheb

There was a lower mean in this section than in previous years. Evidence was not used as effectively as it might have been. A number of responses were unfinished and/or too short.

Part B: Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Thebes – East and West, New Kingdom Egypt

A comparable mean with previous years was achieved. The higher-order requirement of questions was not always addressed. Evidence was not used as effectively as it might have been. A number of responses were unfinished and/or too short.

ATHENS

Section One: Short answer – Unit 3 (24 Marks)

Athens 481–440 BC

The mean was higher on most questions than in previous years. Responses demonstrated some generalisations, though some excellent understanding was also evident.

Section Two: Source analysis – Unit 4 (20 Marks)

Athens, Sparta and the Peloponnesian War 440–404 BC

Many responses were well-structured with all questions attracting the full range of marks available. Weaknesses tended to be a result of less effective analysis/evaluation.

Section Three: Essay

Part A: Unit 3 (25 Marks)

Athens 481–440 BC

Questions 23 and 24 were attempted more confidently and successfully than Question 25, which was a relatively popular question. Discriminators tended to be better use of evidence and stronger ability to evaluate.

Part B: Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Athens, Sparta and the Peloponnesian War 440–404 BC

Several responses that were unfinished and/or short. Maximum marks were slightly lower than in previous years.

ROME

Section One: Short answer – Unit 3 (24 Marks)

Rome 133–63 BC

The mean was higher on many questions than in previous years. Better understanding and ability to use historical evidence effectively was obvious in many responses. Weaker responses approached the questions too generally.

Section Two: Source analysis – Unit 4 (20 Marks)

Rome 63 BC–AD 14

The mean and maximum marks awarded for this section improved compared to previous years. A significant improvement in the structure of responses was evident, improving their overall quality.

Section Three: Essay

Part A: Unit 3 (25 Marks)

Rome 133–63 BC

The mean and maximum mark were higher than in previous years. The lower-order scaffolding in questions was more effectively addressed than the higher-order requirement of questions. A number of responses were unfinished and/or short.

Part B: Unit 4 (25 Marks)

Rome 63 BC–AD 14

A number of responses were unfinished and/or short. Minimum marks in this section were lower than Unit 4 essays in the other contexts.