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Important information

Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2029

Implementation of this study commences in 2025.

Other sources of information

The *[VCAA Bulletin](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx)* is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The Bulletin also regularly includes advice on VCE studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to refer to each issue of the Bulletin. The Bulletin is available as an e-newsletter via [free subscription](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Subscribe.aspx) on the VCAA website.

To assist teachers in developing courses, the VCAA publishes online Support materials (incorporating the previously known *Advice for teachers*).

The current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) contains essential information on assessment processes and other procedures.

VCE providers

Throughout this study design the term ‘school’ is intended to include both schools and other VCE providers.

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Introduction

Scope of study

VCE Classical Studies explores the enduring cultures and ideas of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. These ideas have intrigued and influenced Western societies for centuries. By examining the written works (in translation) and material culture of these two ancient societies, students of Classical Studies develop a rich understanding of the intellectual and cultural life of these cultures.

Study is undertaken by analysing classical works, such as mythologies, written texts, art and artefacts, that were produced in the classical world. Students consider these works in their socio-historical contexts, evaluating and comparing what they reveal about the ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the society in which they were created.

VCE Classical Studies is a foundational Humanities subject – a multifaceted study that encompasses drama, epic poetry, history, philosophy, artworks, architecture and archaeological artefacts.

Rationale

What is a hero? What makes a good leader? How do humans live with the gods? What is the nature of war? What is beauty? What is justice? What is democracy? What does it mean to be human?

The ancient Greeks and ancient Romans posed such questions and responded to them in their works. By exploring their answers, Classical Studies helps us to understand the humanity of the classical world and in turn to better understand ourselves. Students are taken from their known world by engaging deeply with another culture that is simultaneously familiar and strange. In studying classical works, students encounter people that might seem familiar among the defenders of Troy, the competitors at the Olympic Games, the spectators at Athenian drama festivals and the witnesses to the struggles in the Roman Senate.

Students also encounter people with very different values and ethics as they learn, for example, about the heroic code, the Roman virtue of *pietas* and the code of the gladiators. They engage deeply with the past, with diverse perspectives, experiences and worldviews, forming a deep cultural understanding of peoples from other times and places. This helps students to appreciate the traditions and values of others. Those with a deeper understanding of the past are well-positioned to draw lessons from it, while also having a better understanding of the other cultures, values and points of view that they encounter in the present.

VCE Classical Studies explores works that have survived through millennia because they still offer enjoyment, challenge in discovering their nuance, and value in uncovering the ideas they contain. Students are introduced to the development of ideas that are still important today. The inquiry into classical works and the societies that produced them creates rich opportunities to learn about the past and gain a clearer understanding of the modern world. Students develop skills in textual analysis, analysing written and visual evidence, comparing works and constructing arguments, while thinking critically and understanding the significance and influence of external factors such as socio-historical context. These are lifelong skills that are transferable across a range of disciplines and integral to the development of active and engaged citizens in a diverse and changing world.

Aims

This study enables students to:

* develop an understanding of the nature of Classical Studies as a multifaceted discipline
* develop a lifelong interest in the classical world and an understanding of its enduring significance
* develop critical insights into the historical, social and cultural contexts of classical works
* engage in close analysis, comparison and evaluation of classical works
* explore key ideas as presented in classical works
* analyse a range of perspectives and concerns in classical works
* develop an awareness of ancient Greek and Roman thinking and, in turn, a deeper awareness of our own thinking.

Structure

The study is made up of four units.

Unit 1: Mythical worlds (CS011)

Unit 2: Classical worlds (CS022)

Unit 3: Classical expressions (CS033)

Unit 4: Classical perspectives (CS034)

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key skills.

Entry

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 and Unit 4 as a sequence. Units 1 to 4 are designed to a standard that is equivalent to the final two years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum.

Duration

Each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction.

Changes to the study design

During its period of accreditation minor changes to the study will be announced in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). The Bulletin is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the Bulletin.

Monitoring for quality

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the VCAA will periodically undertake an audit of VCE Classical Studies to ensure the study is being taught and assessed as accredited. The details of the audit procedures and requirements are published annually in the [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx). Schools will be notified if they are required to submit material to be audited.

Requirements for delivery

The Principal must make sure that students have access to adequate facilities and resources to complete any VCE study they are offered. There are no requirements for specialist facilities, [teacher qualifications](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/recruitment-schools/policy-and-guidelines/qualifications#teacher-class) and resources specified for this study.

Safety and wellbeing

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking the study.

Employability skills

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop employability skills. The Support materials provide specific examples of how students can develop employability skills during learning activities and assessment tasks.

Legislative compliance

When collecting and using information, the provisions of privacy and copyright legislation, such as the Victorian *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and *Health Records Act 2001*, and the federal *Privacy Act 1988* and *Copyright Act 1968*, must be met.

Child Safe Standards

Schools and education and training providers are required to comply with the Child Safe Standards made under the Victorian *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*. Registered schools are required to comply with *Ministerial Order No. 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*. For further information, consult the websites of the [Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority](https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/Home.aspx), the [Commission for Children and Young People](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/) and the [Department of Education](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy).

Assessment and reporting

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on the teacher’s decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Demonstration of achievement of outcomes and satisfactory completion of a unit are determined by evidence gained through the assessment of a range of learning activities and tasks.

Teachers must develop courses that provide appropriate opportunities for students to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of outcomes.

The decision about satisfactory completion of a unit is distinct from the assessment of levels of achievement. Schools will report a student’s result for each unit to the VCAA as S (satisfactory) or N (not satisfactory).

Levels of achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the VCAA. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

Units 3 and 4

The VCAA specifies the assessment procedures for students undertaking scored assessment in Units 3 and 4. Designated assessment tasks are provided in the details for each unit in VCE study designs.

The student’s level of achievement in Units 3 and 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework (SAC) as specified in the VCE study design, and external assessment.

The VCAA will report the student’s level of achievement on each assessment component as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). To receive a study score the student must achieve two or more graded assessments in the study and receive an S for both Units 3 and 4. The study score is reported on a scale of 0–50; it is a measure of how well the student performed in relation to all others who completed the study. Teachers should refer to the current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score.

Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE Classical Studies are as follows:

* Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
* Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
* end-of-year examination: 50 per cent.

Details of the assessment program are described in the sections on Units 3 and 4 in this study design.

Authentication

Work related to the outcomes of each unit will be accepted only if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all unacknowledged work is the student’s own. Teachers need to refer to the current [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx) for authentication rules and strategies.

Characteristics of the study

The characteristics of VCE Classical Studies define the skills and forms of thinking that students apply to their study of written works and works of material culture from ancient Greece and ancient Rome. These skills and forms of thinking combine to develop a substantive knowledge of classical works and an understanding of their relationships with their socio-historical contexts.

VCE Classical Studies involves processes such as analysing, comparing and interpreting classical works, and evaluating the significance within and of classical works. All elements of these processes are closely interrelated and through their combined application students gain a deeper engagement with classical works and the ideas expressed within them. Student classicists engage with works as products of their time, examining what works reveal about human experience in that moment and forming arguments that are grounded in their engagement with classical culture and ideas.

Identifying features of classical works

Classical Studies requires that students identify, understand and describe explicit characteristics of the nature, form and character of individual written and material works. For material works, such as buildings, artworks or artefacts, this includes identifying and describing the work’s form, function, characteristics, method and time of production, and who, if known, built or made it.

In written works, such as epic poetry, drama, histories and philosophies, students identify and describe authorship, and consider and understand the genre and its conventions. Knowledge of the aforementioned features of written and material works builds an understanding of the classical ideas and values presented.

Contextualising classical works

Students of Classical Studies understand that the works studied reflect the socio-historical context – that is, the specific social, cultural, religious, intellectual, historical and political milieu – of their creation. This can include specific events such as wars or interaction with other cultures. Students therefore examine the ways in which works connect to and reflect this context. Developing an understanding of socio-historical context entails situating the author, artist or producer in the wider socio-historical setting of developments, events and features of the classical society in which the work was produced.

Students consider how the context and intended audience may have influenced the author’s, artist’s or producer’s purpose. Knowledge of socio-historical context supports students in deepening their understanding of classical works and the world in which they were produced.

The ideas presented in classical works reflect the preoccupations and concerns of the work’s socio-historical context. Therefore, by studying classical works students also build an understanding of the socio-historical context, as they come to understand the belief systems and worldviews of the ancient Greeks and Romans that are presented in the works.

As students progress through their study, they begin making connections to other classical works and drawing comparisons between how ideas are presented in different works and contexts.

Analysing classical works

The analysis of classical written and material works is central to Classical Studies. Through engaging in close analysis, students build on their knowledge of a work and examine and evaluate how the author, artist or producer responded to their particular concerns, context and audience. Students analyse the ideas presented in works and the specific methods and techniques that were used in the presentation of these ideas and consider how the purpose of the author or artist influences the way they present the work.

Students analyse specific details in a work to build an understanding of how each element relates to the bigger picture, or whole, that it creates. Close analysis also considers how the work connects to its form and culture, such as its purpose and use of classical genre conventions. Students analyse *which* ideas are presented, *how* they are conveyed through a range of forms, and the techniques that are particular to each form, genre or writer. For example, a student might analyse how a simile in an epic poem conveys key aspects of a character’s personality or helps the audience to understand a complex idea; or how the composition of, or symbolism in, an artwork conveys meaning.

Evaluating significance within or of classical works

Students of VCE Classical Studies analyse what is important in classical works in distinct ways:

* Close analysis of sections or passages within a classical work enables students to evaluate the significance of parts of the work to the broader understanding of the work as a whole. This could include the analysis of a particular technique, such as recurring imagery, identified through close analysis. Students analyse the significance of sections or passages of a work to the work as a whole to build their understanding and facilitate their evaluation of the work.
* Analysis of significance also refers to the relationship between a work and other works, such as the significance of a single work within a body of works of a similar form or that present similar ideas or concerns. It may also include the influence of a work beyond its immediate socio-historical context, such as the Roman adoption of Greek modes and forms.
* In Units 1 and 2, evaluation of significance is also applied to the way people of later ages have connected to the classical world, such as in the exchange of classical ideas and forms beyond the classical period. Students examine the significance of the classical world and classical works in influencing works of a later period and their use in modern media such as literature, art, film and video gaming. Students also consider the significance of ongoing debates regarding ethical concerns involving archaeological sites and finds.

Comparing classical works

Comparative analysis builds on the skills of identifying features of classical works, socio-historical contextualisation and close analysis, and requires that students compare and contrast works. Students start by making comparisons within works and move towards finding similarities and differences in works that address similar ideas or concerns in various forms or genres. Students also identify and compare the different techniques used to express ideas in the works studied.

In comparing works, students may identify and analyse changes and continuities of form or genre and/or ideas through time within the classical contexts. Students can also establish similarities and differences between the exploration of ideas in different forms (such as the depiction of an event in a history and in a tragedy), or how two works might be responding to the same idea or issue at different times. Students may analyse how different works represent similar ideas but adopt different emphases and perspectives due to variation in genre, socio-historical context and/or authorial intent.

Comparative analysis of works can reveal how the socio-historical context helps to shape the author’s or artist’s purpose. Through the identification of similar understandings of an idea across forms or contexts, students gain an understanding of its significance within classical culture.

Interpreting classical works using evidence

In VCE Classical Studies, students act as classicists by responding to and developing interpretations of classical works based on the evidence drawn from the works. They gather, consider, sort and make selective judgments about the evidence, based on their analysis and comparison of the works. The selection of evidence from these works is influenced by their knowledge of the socio-historical contexts, the concerns of the classical world, the ideas in the work and the techniques used to express those ideas.

The fundamental subject of analysis in Classical Studies is the classical work itself, and the interpretation of the work is informed by a student’s knowledge of the socio-historical context. Based on their study, students construct an evidence-based interpretation of classical works that is grounded in classical ideas and reflects the intention of the writer or producer of the work. This response, expressed through argument, illustrates the student’s understanding of a work’s features, meaning, significance and relationship with other works, and situates it within its socio-historical context.

Terms used in this study

For the purposes of this study design and associated assessment, the following definitions apply.

Classical

‘Classical’ refers to two classical societies of the Western tradition – ancient Greece and ancient Rome. For ancient Greece, this study may include the study of works and culture from the late Bronze Age (c.1600–1100 BCE); the period spanning the emergence of Greek city states from the late Iron Age through the Archaic Age (c. 800–500 BCE); the Classical Age (c. 500–323 BCE); and the Hellenistic Age (c. 323–31 BCE).

The study of ancient Rome may include material from the late Roman Republic (c. 146–31 BCE) and the Roman Empire from the Julio–Claudian dynasty to the Emperor Constantine (c. 31 BCE–337 CE).

Classical works

‘Classical works’ refers to written works and works of material culture.

Written works include works of different genres, such as epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, history and philosophy. All works are studied in English translation and no Greek or Latin is required. In Units 3 and 4 a work may be the entire original work, such as a play, or a section of a larger whole, such as a book from an epic poem, a single biography by a historian or a prescribed selection of extracts from a larger work or a writer’s body of work.

‘Material culture’ refers to the visual and tangible remains of the classical culture. This may include archaeological evidence, architecture, art and artefacts. A material work may be a single object or building, or a group of items, such as buildings, sculptures, artworks and other artefacts, as defined in the Classical works list.

Concerns

In Unit 4, Area of Study 1 ‘concerns’ refers to matters that preoccupied the producers of classical works across a range of times and genres; for example, the presentation of war and warfare; the nature of power and authority; the conception of their own identity and that of others. See also Ideas and Themes.

Ideas

‘Idea’ refers to the message conveyed by the creator of a work, whether explicitly or implicitly, for example the glory or pathos of war. See also Concerns and Themes.

Pictorial art

For the purposes of this study, ‘pictorial art’ refers to forms of art that depict pictures or scenes, such as paintings, mosaics or imagery on vases.

Socio-historical context

‘Socio-historical context’ refers to the world in which classical works were produced. It encompasses specific events as well as historical, social, cultural, religious, intellectual and political settings. The socio-historical context of a work includes the way people lived in that place at that time, and the events that shaped their lives.

The consideration of socio-historical context informs student understanding of the works and how the works have been shaped by features of their particular ancient era. Specific aspects of the socio-historical context may include:

* historical context (such as a work that was created in a time of war or after/in response to a particular event)
* social and cultural context (such as societal and cultural norms and understandings conveyed by the work, the position in society of men and women, representation of women mostly by male authors, slaves and citizens, religion and belief, ideals and values, and worldview)
* socio-political context (such as a political climate or era)
* performance context (such as the original audience or readers of ancient works and the context in which they were intended to be performed/read; the way the original audience/readers would view the work)
* contexts of material culture (such as the production, commission, intended use and intended audience).

Techniques

‘Techniques’ are methods used by authors and artists to convey meaning in classical works. They differ between genres and forms of works. In both written and material works students should be aware of particular features of the genre or form.

For written works, techniques are those evident in the English translation that reflect the likely original intention of the classical author. They include text features such as structural and narrative techniques, genre conventions, setting, plot devices, characterisation and imagery. Techniques that are particular to the English translation should not be considered. These include rhyming and metrical schemes, alliteration, onomatopoeia, formatting, italicisation, punctuation, comment on specific connotations of a particular English word or anachronistic language, or concepts introduced by the translator. Students may, however, examine the general tenor or tone of language and the translator’s stage directions if they are reflected by the dialogue of the play.

Techniques used in written works include:

* structure and narrative
* setting (such as the mortal world, the divine world, the underworld, the court room, the assembly, the city, the countryside)
* plot and plot devices (such as a metamorphosis, a deception plot, dramatic irony, divine intervention)
* forms of delivery (such as messenger speeches and the *agōn* in Greek tragedy, the *parabasis* in Aristophanes, *elenchus* in Socratic dialogues, persuasive speech in all genres)
* rhetorical devices (such as irony, rhetorical question, tautology)
* general tenor and tone of the language (such as verbal irony, humour, a didactic style, a sarcastic and ridiculing tone, use of euphemism, tragic diction, use of recurring language such as the language of fear or loss)
* similes, metaphors and imagery (such as nautical imagery, animal imagery)
* epithets and formulae (repeated descriptive phrase)
* characterisation and motivation
* point of view (such as of the citizen male, the woman, the slave, the ‘other’, a person in love, a condemned person)
* creation of a mood or emotion (such as pathos or ominous, celebratory, horror or anger)
* staging (when a play involves costume, props or a ‘machine’)
* genre conventions (characteristics or techniques that are typical of the genre or the author’s style)
* manipulation of genre (such as when Tacitus places his work in the tradition of Sallust, or when Aristophanes’s characters mock tragic diction).

Techniques used in material culture works include:

* construction methods (such as engineering methods and methods used to create the architectural features of buildings); the block method or lost-wax method of freestanding sculptures; the carving and drilling techniques of freestanding and relief sculpture; the black-figure and red-figure techniques of vase painting; the fresco technique in painting; and the *opus tessellatum* and *opus vermiculatum* techniques for constructing mosaics
* compositional techniques (such as positioning of figures, objects and motifs; use of space, colour, perspective, chiaroscuro, contrapposto; portrayal of anatomy and physical form, movement and stance, and expression and clothing)
* expressive techniques (such as iconography, symbolism, idealisation or naturalism) and where a specific choice has been made to make a statement (such as the use of an innovative material or technological development, or the use of a particular style or form from another time or culture for a particular purpose).

Themes

‘Theme’ and ‘thematic’ are used to refer to the broader subject matter of a work(s) and the significant features of the classical world that are revealed by it. A work in these areas of study may document an aspect of a classical concern or an aspect of classical life, Greek or Roman religious ritual, for example, but not necessarily express an idea. See also Concerns and Ideas.

Units 1 and 2

Selection of classical works

In Units 1 and 2, the selection of classical works is a school-based decision. Teachers select the myths, classical works, modern work(s) and archaeological site(s) to be studied by their students.

Teachers are encouraged to include both written works and material works in their program. Written works can include works of different forms, such as epic poetry, tragedy, comedy, history and philosophy. They may be whole texts or extracts. Students work with translations of written works rather than with the Classical Greek or Latin. Material works refer to works of material culture, meaning the visual and tangible remains of the classical culture. This may include archaeological evidence, architecture, art and artefacts.

In Unit 1, Area of Study 2, students may study archaeological sites associated with a myth they have studied in Area of Study 1, or new myths may be introduced. There should be no other repetition of works in Units 1 and 2.

Works chosen for Units 1 and 2 may not be repeated in Units 3 or 4. However, sections or extracts from a larger written or material work may be studied if the same section is not repeated in another unit.

To assist teachers in developing courses, the VCAA publishes online Support materials (incorporating the previously known *Advice for teachers*).

Unit 1: Mythical worlds

This unit of study explores the myths of ancient Greece and/or ancient Rome, the search for their meaning, and their contribution to both classical and modern culture.

Myths are traditional narratives that examine ideas of central importance to a society. They were used by the Greeks and the Romans to explain the world, the foundation of institutions, aspects of daily life and the human condition. In the classical world, myth encompassed the nature of the gods, the deeds of heroes like Achilles and Theseus, and the epic voyages of Odysseus and Aeneas. Women such as Helen, Clytemnestra and Dido have endured in myths that contemplate love and war, the human and the monstrous. Students examine the nature and function of selected myths and consider the influence of the myths studied on modern culture.

Students also explore the history of archaeology in the Mediterranean Basin, observing how the pioneers of archaeology sought to explain the possible historical basis of particular myths. They excavated sites such as Hisarlik (believed to be Troy), Knossos and Mycenae in search of the mythical heroes and their worlds. Students study archaeological sites connected to myths and consider the relationship between a myth and its archaeological record, such as site features and material culture. They critically assess whether there is a historical basis for the myth and draw evidence from the archaeological record to reach conclusions about the society that inhabited the site. Students engage with current debates about the ethics of archaeology and ownership of the past.

Area of Study 1

Gods, heroes and the legacy of myth

* What is the nature of the gods?
* What constitutes a hero?
* What can myths reveal about a society?
* Why are elements of classical works adopted in later works?

In this area of study students examine the myths that underpin the cultures of ancient Greece and/or ancient Rome. Myths were one way in which the Greeks and Romans explained the world and the part that humans play in it. Myths about the creation of the world, the birth of the gods and the origins of humans were of central importance to these societies. Myths explained natural law and the relationships between gods and mortals that shaped the successes and failures of legendary heroes, and the understandings of everyday people. In both ancient societies, myths were used to explain the origins of social structures and the way in which society conducted itself. Myths informed and explained key aspects of everyday life, such as values and customs, rites of passage, and family and gender relationships. In ancient Rome especially, myths focused on the city of Rome itself, its foundation, and its empire; Greek myths were also adopted and adapted to a Roman context.

Students investigate the key Greek and/or Roman gods, learning about their individual responsibilities and how they are represented in myths. They learn about the characteristics of individual gods, their behaviour and their interactions with the human world.

Students study hero myths, uncovering the world of the hero through their depiction in classical works, exploring their codes of conduct and the nature of the gods who helped or hindered them. The heroes represent different qualities. For example, Achilles embodies the greatness of the warrior in war; Odysseus is the smart thinker who uses his cunning and intelligence to overcome his enemies; and Aeneas represents the epitome of devotion to the gods and to family. Heroes face many obstacles. They confront death on the battlefield, vengeful gods, terrifying monsters and their own limitations. They encounter women, some of whom offer guidance and assistance, but many of whom occupy positions that are challenging and unconventional, ambiguous or marginal.

Students explore narratives in Greek and/or Roman myths that explain the nature of gods and heroes, such as war narratives, quest narratives, and/or myths of the foundation of Greek or Roman cities. They examine the characteristics, content and function of these stories. They consider the ways in which myths were communicated, such as through oral traditions and epic poetry, vase paintings and sculpture. They consider what myth reveals about the concerns and nature of the society they are studying.

Students examine the ways in which classical works influence later ages by considering the impact of classical myths on modern culture, such as in film, literature or art; tracing the narrative pattern of the hero’s journey and observing similar patterns and tropes in modern works; or defining the traits of a Homeric or Virgilian hero and comparing these to modern characters who conform to, or depart from, classical heroic ideals, explaining why this might be the case. Students consider why myths of the classical world still resonate today, exploring where, how and why myths have been used and adapted.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain the functions and forms of myths in the classical world and the relationship between classical works and those from a later period.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* key Greek and/or Roman gods, their responsibilities, and characteristics and functions in myths
* the characteristics of the hero in classical myths, such as Heracles (or Roman Hercules), Jason, Achilles, Odysseus, Theseus, Romulus and Aeneas
* the narratives of selected hero myths, such as quest narratives, war narratives and/or myths of the foundation of cities
* the ways in which myths were communicated, such as through the oral tradition, epic poetry, vase paintings and sculpture
* the characteristics of classical societies as expressed through myths, such as beliefs, values, and traits of men and women that were held in high or low regard
* the nature, characteristics and functions of myths, such as narrative patterns, heroic traits, divine mechanics, and the understandings and moral lessons taken from myths
* classical influences on a modern work(s), such as film, literature, art or video games.

Key skills

* explain the features of classical myths, including the characters, both human and divine, and the narrative
* describe the purpose and function of myths and ways in which myths were communicated, and infer what they might express about the society
* explain the characteristics of the hero in selected classical hero myths
* explain the significance of classical works as influences on works of a later period, and the reasons for their adaptation
* identify similarities and differences between classical works and those of a later period, and account for the similarities and differences
* explain the functions and forms of myths in the classical world and the relationship between classical works and those from a later period, using evidence from classical works and works of a later period.

Area of Study 2

Myths and archaeological practice

* What have archaeological discoveries meant for the study of myths?
* Do myths have any basis in historical events?
* What can archaeological evidence reveal about a society?
* Why is archaeological evidence the subject of debates about ethics and ownership?

In this area of study students examine the search for historical truth in myths that they have studied. These may be myths studied in Area of Study 1 and/or new myths selected for this area of study. There are numerous myths that have connections to archaeological sites, such as the Trojan War myth and its link to the sites of Troy and Mycenae; the Theseus and the Minotaur myth and its connection to the Minoan palace at Knossos. Also, the myths of Romulus and Remus, and Aeneas, and their roles in the foundation of Rome, can be linked to an examination of key sites in the city of Rome; and the worship of the hero Hercules can be connected to his mythical founding of various cities such as Herculaneum.

Students study the history of archaeological sites associated with myth. Students of Greek mythology could study the early development of archaeological methods in the work of Heinrich Schliemann and Arthur Evans, examining the triumphs, failures and controversies of these romantic figures and their excavations at Troy (Hisarlik), Mycenae and Knossos, and speculating about enduring questions such as whether the Trojan War really took place. Students of Roman mythology might examine the role of Mussolini in the archaeology of Rome, as much of what we see now is the result of campaigns to legitimise and glorify the Fascist regime.

Students study an archaeological site or sites, considering the historical basis of its associated myth. They study the site’s location and relevant era(s) of settlement, use and abandonment (if known); they examine its features, along with examples of the material culture from the site. They consider what the archaeological evidence reveals about the society (such as their daily life and customs, beliefs, values) and the concerns of the site’s inhabitants.

Students engage with past and current ethical issues associated with archaeology, such as how the reconstruction of archaeological sites influences our interpretation of them. They encounter the contested classical past, through topics such as repatriation and contentious ownership of artefacts, the impact of tourism on archaeological sites or the ethics of displaying human remains at those sites.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to explain how archaeology has informed our understanding of classical myths and society and identify ethical issues in archaeology.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* the history and methodology of archaeological investigation in the Mediterranean Basin at sites associated with a classical myth, such as the myths of the Trojan War and Theseus and the Minotaur, Romulus and Remus, and Aeneas
* the context of a site, including its location and era of settlement
* archaeological evidence that corresponds to or departs from classical myth(s), such as at the sites Hisarlik (Troy), Mycenae, Knossos and the city of Rome
* the original use or purpose of artefacts from an archaeological site(s)
* the characteristics of a society as revealed through different forms of archaeological evidence
* issues and debates in archaeology such as ethics, tourism and controversies about ownership of the past.

Key skills

* explain the features of an archaeological site(s) and archaeological evidence that corresponds to or departs from classical myth(s)
* describe the context of the site, such as the location, era of settlement and excavation
* explain the original use and purpose of artefacts from an archaeological site and explain what archaeological evidence reveals about the society of the occupants of the site
* explain the significance of examples of archaeological evidence in proving or disproving a myth
* identify similarities and differences within and between archaeological evidence and selected myth(s) as seen in classical works
* explain how archaeology has informed our understanding of classical myths and society, using evidence from myths and archaeological investigations, and identify ethical issues in archaeology.

Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments of Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit, students are required to demonstrate two outcomes. As a set, these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

* an essay
* a folio
* a debate or speech
* a report
* an extended response
* responses to short and/or structured questions
* an analysis of an extract or image(s)
* a multimedia presentation.

Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks, they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Unit 2: Classical worlds

In this unit students examine classical society. They discover how mythic systems, ideas and beliefs, and classical works were integral to the fabric of classical culture. They use classical works, and the context in which they were created and disseminated, as a means of exploring religious, social, political or philosophical life in classical antiquity.

Mythic systems and narratives provided the foundations of the ancient Greeks’ and ancient Romans’ beliefs and religious practices, and therefore their worldview. They permeated daily life; both representing and forming classical culture. In Area of Study 1 students explore where and how the original audience experienced these stories and the ways in which context informed their presentation. Students examine the use and place of myths in classical culture, considering how myths, ideas and beliefs were expressed in the religion and everyday life of Greeks and/or Romans, such as through festivals, religious rituals, cult practices, literature, art and architecture.

In Area of Study 2 students analyse the ways in which creators of classical works convey ideas and beliefs in their works and how the works link to, and are influenced by, their socio-historical contexts. Students engage in close analysis of classical works, considering how ideas are expressed in classical works. They consider the influence on modern culture of a work or works they have studied.

Area of Study 1

Myths, ideas and beliefs in classical culture

* How did mythic systems influence everyday life, ideas and belief?
* What do mythic narratives reveal about religion and society in ancient Greece and/or ancient Rome?
* How and where were myths, ideas and beliefs communicated in the classical world?
* What do representations of myths reveal about classical ideas and beliefs?

In this area of study students examine the use and representation of myths in everyday life. Mythic systems helped classical peoples make meaning of their world, forming the basis of their ideas and beliefs. The practice of religion, which was underpinned by myth, informed many aspects of everyday life, social practices and politics in cultures that did not separate religion and state.

Students study written and material works representing myth and expressing mythic beliefs and ideas and they come to understand the pervasiveness of myths throughout classical spaces and culture. They investigate the physical and cultural context in which myths, ideas and beliefs were expressed to classical audiences, such as at sites associated with religious practices, in Greek and Roman drama, in art and in public and private spaces.

Many classical works use myth as a basis for exploration of ideas and beliefs that are relevant to the contemporary context of the creator of the work. Students investigate the socio-historical contexts of the works studied. They apply knowledge of a work’s context to their interpretation of the work. They consider how evidence about classical society and its beliefs and ideas is constructed by written works and material works. They examine features of a work’s artistic or literary form and examine the presentation of myth within the work. They analyse the ideas and beliefs represented by myth and through the practice of mythic ritual, such as beliefs, values and attitudes. Students develop their skills in analysing classical works by considering the techniques used to present the ideas and beliefs in the works studied.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the representations and place of myth in classical culture and the ideas and beliefs they convey.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* ways in which myths, ideas and beliefs were expressed in the daily life of ancient Greece and/or Rome, such as at sanctuary sites, through festivals, oracles, religious rituals and visual displays
* key aspects of the socio-historical context of works representing myth, such as relevant aspects of the historical, social, cultural, religious and political settings at the time of the work’s creation
* the relationship between the socio-historical context and the representation of myth, ideas and beliefs
* key features of classical culture and classical works expressing myth, ideas and beliefs, such as artistic or literary techniques, form, narrative, key characters and figures
* ideas and beliefs conveyed in the representation of myths in classical culture and classical works
* techniques used to convey myths, ideas and beliefs in classical culture and classical works.

Key skills

* analyse the key features of representations of myth, ideas and beliefs in classical culture and classical works, and explain how they were expressed in the daily life of ancient Greece and/or Rome.
* analyse the ideas and beliefs expressed in classical culture and the techniques used to convey them
* explain the significance of classical works, or particular sections of those works, and their influence on the representations of ideas, techniques and context
* explain similarities and differences in the forms and techniques of expression in classical culture and classical works
* analyse the myths, ideas and beliefs represented in classical culture using evidence from classical works.

Area of Study 2

Expressing classical cultures

* How does the socio-historical context influence the expression of classical ideas?
* What do classical works reveal about the society in which they were produced?
* How do we understand the intent of the author or artist and their expression of key ideas?
* How have classical ideas and/or works been used as an expression of later culture and ideas?

In this area of study, students explore classical works, examining their ideas and how they are presented, and building a deeper understanding of the society in which the works were produced by developing interpretations based on evidence from classical works.

Members of classical societies used different forms of works such as epic and lyric poetry, history, tragedy and comedy, philosophy, architecture and art to express ideas that were important to them. These works enabled classical writers and artists to respond to their socio-historical context and examine social and political life.

Students analyse classical works and the socio-historical contexts in which they were produced. Socio-historical contexts might include relevant events and social, cultural, intellectual, political and performance contexts, as well as contexts of material culture, such as the work’s production, commissioning, intended use and audience. Students use this knowledge to aid their understanding of a work. Students explore what works reveal about the society that produced them.

Analysis of classical works requires an understanding of the form or genre of the work, its creator and their intended purpose and audience, and the examination of the key ideas conveyed by the work and how these related to their socio-historical context. Students should be familiar with the conventions of the form or genre they are studying.

Students also examine the techniques used by writers and artists to express their ideas. Examples of techniques for consideration can be found in Terms used in this study, [pages 14–16](#Terms).

Students examine an example or examples of later culture that show the influence of a classical work or classical ideas they have studied in Unit 2. Elements of ancient Greek and ancient Roman culture have endured to the present day, exerting a powerful influence on art, architecture, literature, film, philosophy and science in Western society and beyond.

Students consider how and why classical works and ideas have been used and the ideas or allusions they are intended to convey. Students might examine allusions to classical works they have studied in a work of poetry or other literature; or analyse an adaptation of a work they have studied. They could evaluate representations of characters or works they have studied in a modern film or consider modern characters in film or literature that are similar to those they have studied.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the ways in which works present the key ideas of ancient Greece and/or Rome.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* the authors or artists of classical works and a modern work(s), their purpose and their intended audiences
* key features of the artistic or literary forms of classical works, such as genre or form conventions; plot, narrative or subject matter; key characters and figures of classical works; classical influences on a modern work(s)
* key aspects of the socio-historical context of ancient Greece and/or ancient Rome, such as the time when the work(s) was created, relevant historical events, social and cultural life, political structures, class, gender roles, family, and religious beliefs
* the relationship between classical works and their socio-historical contexts
* key ideas of the society expressed in classical works, such as fate and free will, justice and revenge, civilisation versus barbarism, and the role of gender
* techniques used to express key ideas in classical works, such as characterisation, imagery, and literary or artistic techniques that are seen in English translation.

Key skills

* analyse key features of the artistic or literary form, plot and/or narrative, key characters and figures of classical works
* explain how the socio-historical context is reflected in classical works
* analyse ideas expressed in classical works and explain techniques used to express these ideas in classical works
* explain the significance of classical influences on a work or works from a later period
* explain similarities and differences in the forms and techniques of expression in classical works and a work or works of a later period
* construct arguments analysing the ways in which classical works present key ideas of ancient Greece and/or Rome using evidence from classical works.

Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments at Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate two outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

* an essay
* a folio
* a debate speech
* a report
* an extended response
* responses to short and/or structured questions
* an analysis of an extract or image(s)
* a multimedia presentation.

Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks, they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

Unit 3

Selection of classical works

Works to be studied in Unit 3 are selected from the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx).

In Area of Study 1, teachers select either a Greek or a Roman work Here, a work is defined as a prescribed ‘book’ (equivalent of a modern chapter) of an epic poem. Works in this Area of Study will be taken from Homer’s *The* *Iliad* or Virgil’s *The* *Aeneid*.

In Area of Study 2, teachers select either a Greek or a Roman material culture option. The option for each culture will be either a single work (such as a building) or a collection of works of a particular form (such as sculpture).

Works studied in Units 1 and 2 may not be studied in Unit 3. However, sections or extracts from a larger written or material work may be studied if the same section is not studied in another unit.

Unit 3: Classical expressions

In this unit students engage with two forms of cultural expression of the classical world: epic poetry and material culture. Students develop their breadth of classical interpretation by examining two vastly different mediums through which classical societies expressed ideas and understandings.

They explore the worlds and heroes in the work of an epic poet of Greece or Rome and consider the values and ideas conveyed by this foundational form of expression. They then examine Greek or Roman material culture, exploring physical and visual media such as monuments, buildings or artworks.

Material culture offers a distinctive window for understanding the classical world and its cultural norms, ideology, rituals and daily life.

Students consider these literary and material works within their socio-historical contexts, evaluating what they reveal about the ideas, attitudes and beliefs of the society that produced them, and further deepening their understanding of a classical society or classical societies.

Area of Study 1

The epic tradition

* What is epic poetry?
* How does a work of epic poetry reflect the society that created it?
* What makes an epic hero?
* What ideas are expressed in epic poetry and how are they expressed?

This area of study examines epic poetry, one of the most enduring ancient forms. Epics are long narrative poems typically set in the mythical world of gods and heroes.

Epic poetry explores ideas of identity, heroism, legacy, the pathos of war, fate and the place of humans in the world. Through a study of epic poetry students come to understand how the Greeks or Romans grappled with these big ideas, and how they formed and expressed their identity and ideas through this genre.

Epic poems reflect the concerns, beliefs and values of the socio-historical context in which they were produced. Understanding Homer’s socio-historical context entails situating the work in the context of its production in an oral culture in the Greek Archaic period. Students consider the broad social and political structures of early Archaic Greece and the changing nature of the Greek world as its city states transformed and expanded through colonisation. They consider what is known about the religion and customs of this period and the ideals and values that are conveyed by the *Iliad*. Much of Virgil’s life was lived against a backdrop of intense political unrest, culminating in the effective end of the Roman Republic. Students consider the *Aeneid* as both a celebration of Augustus’s achievements in restoring stability to Rome after civil war and a more subtle expression of misgivings about Roman imperialism and warnings against returning to conflict.

Students examine details and features of the prescribed work. These reveal key ideas and values of the epic poet’s culture, as well as the work's broader significance to the whole prescribed work and its relationship to its socio-historical context.

Students respond analytically, producing reasoned arguments that use evidence from the prescribed work. Through this close analysis of the work, they come to understand how epic poetry explored and shaped cultural identity. They examine and analyse the values of the Homeric or Virgilian worlds and the attributes and requirements of a hero. They see how their work presents ideas of fame, bravery and heroism, the pathos of war and the involvement of the gods in their fates.

Students also study how the poem was composed, in either an oral context (in the case of Homer), or a literary context (in the case of Virgil), and key conventions and techniques of epic poetry. They need only consider techniques that can be seen in English translation and that reflect the original intention of the epic poet. These include descriptive techniques such as similes, epithets and formulae (repeated descriptive phrases), and narrative and structural techniques such as narrative prose and direct speech, including dramatic dialogue and speeches.

In this area of study, students study a work (in this case a ‘book’) of either Greek or Roman epic poetry. This is selected from the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx).

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the key ideas and techniques in a prescribed work of epic poetry and explain its relationship to its socio-historical context.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* the key features of epic poetry, including genre characteristics, plot and narrative, key characters and figures
* the socio-historical context in which the epic poem emerged, including the author, their purpose and intended audience, and known historical, social, cultural and political settings at the time of the work’s creation
* the relationship between epic poetry and its socio-historical context, including the portrayal of cultural norms and understandings, values, religion and conception of the gods, ideas, beliefs and (in the case of Virgil) contemporary and historical events
* the key ideas expressed in epic poetry, including heroism, honour and glory, war, fate, virtues and norms for men and women
* the techniques of epic poetry used by the poet to express ideas in the work, including style, poetic techniques, genre conventions, language, imagery, similes, metaphors, epithets, description, emotive language, the role of the divine and structural techniques such as narrative and direct speech
* the relationship between sections of the prescribed work to the prescribed work as a whole.

Key skills

* analyse the features of the prescribed work
* explain the socio-historical context of the prescribed work’s creation and the relationship between the work and its socio-historical context
* analyse key ideas and the techniques used to express those ideas in the prescribed work
* evaluate the significance of sections of the prescribed work to the prescribed work as a whole
* analyse similarities and differences within the prescribed work, including continuity or change in plot, characterisation and presentation of key ideas
* construct reasoned arguments about key ideas and techniques in the prescribed work using relevant evidence from the prescribed work.

Area of Study 2

Material culture

* How was a work of material culture made?
* What does a material work reveal about its socio-historical context?
* What ideas, values, beliefs and cultural norms are conveyed by a material work?
* What artistic, compositional and expressive techniques are used to convey a material work’s ideas?

This area of study examines the material culture of ancient Greece or Rome. Material culture is the visual and tangible remains of the culture. Works of material culture provide insights into how a culture forms its identity, conveys its worldview and creates a sense of place and history. Through studying material culture students come to understand how classical societies expressed their culture and ideas through physical and visual displays.

Students closely analyse the prescribed work(s) and evaluate the importance of the subject to its form, such as how one feature of a building conveys the broader ideas of that building. Students also examine the purpose of the work(s) and the ideas and themes expressed in it, and the methods and techniques used in the work’s creation.

Identifying the features of a material work(s) entails understanding the work’s form, original use, method and time of production, and who (if known) built or made it. Students understand the socio-historical context of the work(s) and the artist’s or producer’s purpose in creating it. Students then analyse how the subject matter of the work(s) and the artistic, compositional and expressive techniques used to create it convey classical themes, ideas and beliefs.

Techniques

Students examine a range of techniques within material culture works, see [pages 15-16](#Techniques). Examples of works of material culture include buildings, sculptures and pictorial art.

Buildings

The study of a building or monument entails understanding the era in which it was produced, its patronage (if known), construction context and function. Students learn about the form and original use of the building, its engineering and design, and the construction methods and materials used. They identify any explicit and implied messaging of the building and examine any iconography or symbolism within the features of the building. They also identify key ideas and cultural norms that are conveyed by the building and evaluate the artistic, compositional and expressive techniques the artist or architect has used to convey those ideas.

Sculpture

The study of Greek or Roman sculpture involves examining a sculptural form, such as free-standing sculpture, portrait sculpture or relief sculpture (a wall-mounted sculpture on a monument or building). Students study a range of examples of the form from different periods in Greek or Roman history.

Pictorial art

For the purposes of this study, ‘pictorial art’ refers to forms of art that depict pictures or scenes, such as paintings, mosaics or imagery on vases.

Students closely analyse the images on the artworks, examining their purpose, construction and (where relevant) the context in which they were used or displayed.

The study of Romain mosaic considers the physical context in which the mosaic appeared, and the construction and placement methods used. The study of Roman paintings considers the physical context of the painting, the style of the painting, and the method used to create it.

The study of the imagery on Greek vases involves understanding the original use or purpose of the imagery in relation to the shapes and styles of the vases, and the construction methods of the black-figure and red-figure techniques. Students learn about the scenes represented on vases, mosaics and paintings and analyse the artistic, compositional and expressive techniques that are used to convey key ideas and cultural norms. They closely analyse individual works and consider their significance within a corpus of prescribed works. This might involve comparing similarities and differences in the presentation of ideas across several works and/or comparing different examples of the form.

In this area of study, the work studied is prescribed in the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). Each work or collection of works appears on the list for a minimum of two years and a maximum of four years.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse the key ideas and techniques used in the production of the prescribed material work(s) and its relationship to its socio-historical context.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* the key features of the prescribed material work(s), including construction methods, materials, subject matter and original function
* the socio-historical context of the creation of the prescribed material work(s), including the artist, architect, school or creator (if known), its purpose and intended audiences and the historical, social, cultural and political settings at the time of its creation
* the ideas and/or themes expressed in the prescribed material work(s)
* the techniques used in the prescribed material work(s) to represent ideas and themes, including compositional and expressive techniques
* the relationship of sections of a prescribed material work to the work as a whole or of an individual work to other examples of its form, in the presentation of ideas/themes and/or techniques
* similarities and differences between different examples of a form or different depictions of an idea.

Key skills

* analyse the features of the prescribed material work(s), including form, construction techniques and original use or purpose
* analyse the relationship between the prescribed material work(s) and its socio-historical contexts
* analyse the ideas and/or themes expressed in the prescribed material work(s) and the compositional and expressive techniques used by the artist or architect to express these ideas represented in the material work(s)
* evaluate the significance of sections of the prescribed material work(s) to the work as a whole or describe the significance of a single work in relation to other examples of the form
* analyse similarities and differences between examples of a form
* analyse key ideas and techniques used in the production of the prescribed material work(s) using relevant evidence from the prescribed material work(s).

School-based assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

Assessment of levels of achievement

School-assessed Coursework

The student’s level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes Support materials for this study, which include advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student’s level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher’s assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** | **Marks allocated** | **Assessment tasks** |
| **Outcome 1**  Analyse the key ideas and techniques in a prescribed work of epic poetry and explain its relationship to its socio-historical context. | **50** | At least two of the following assessment tasks are to be completed in Unit 3:   * a written analysis task on extract/s or image/s * short-answer and/or structured questions * an extended response * an essay.   Teachers may choose to select one or more assessment tasks for each outcome. The assessment tasks may be undertaken in any order. |
| **Outcome 2**  Analyse the key ideas and techniques used in the production of the prescribed material work(s) and its relationship to its socio-historical context. | **50** |
| **Total marks** | **100** |  |

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination (see [page 41](#Examination)), which will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

Unit 4

Selection of classical works

In Unit 4, students undertake the study of works prescribed in the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). The works list includes a selection of prescribed works for each classical concern in Area of Study 1 and a selection of paired works prescribed for Area of Study 2. One work from each pair in Area of Study 2 (designated as Work 1) will be included among the prescribed works of the classical concern in Area of Study 1. Other prescribed works for Area of Study 1 include short written works, such as speeches, poems and extracts from literary, historical, philosophical writings; and material works, such as free standing or relief sculptures, monuments, vases, coins and other artefacts.

Teachers choose one concern for Area of Study 1 and the corresponding pair of works for Area of Study 2. The VCE Classical works list will offer Greek and Roman options.

In this area of study, the work studied is prescribed in the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). Each work or collection of works appears on the list for a minimum of two years and a maximum of four years.

Works selected for Unit 4 should not have been studied in Units 1–3.

Unit 4: Classical perspectives

In this unit students engage with the intellectual life of the classical world through a thematic cultural study of an overarching concern of classical culture and through analysis, evaluation and comparison of a range of different works. Students are exposed to a range of forms and genres of classical written and material works.

In Area of Study 1, students analyse and evaluate the significance of a key concern of the classical world to understand how producers of works across forms and genres, time and/or societies engaged with similar ideas. Students analyse various short written works and material works and compare the ways these works of different forms and genres express similar concerns and ideas. Among the prescribed works for this area of study is a designated work from the pair of works they will study in Area of Study 2 (Work 1). In Area of Study 1, students focus on the expression of the classical concern within the works to develop and deepen their understanding of the broader socio-historical context in which the designated work was created.

In Area of Study 2 students engage in an in-depth comparative study of two prescribed works. They analyse and compare ways in which two classical authors use different genres and/or techniques to express ideas within their works and how different works represent similar ideas but may have different emphases and perspectives due to such variations as genre, socio-historical context and authorial intent.

Area of Study 1

Classical concerns

* What was the relationship between classical concerns and their socio-historical context?
* How and why did perspectives on classical concerns differ on the questions that preoccupied ancient Greeks and/or Romans?
* What was the mindset and worldview of the ancient Greeks or Romans at a particular time?
* How can works of different genres, forms and contexts build our understanding of classical culture?

In this area of study students analyse a selection of prescribed materials and short written works that reflect a specified key concern of classical culture. Prescribed materials will include short written texts, such as speeches, poems and short extracts from literary, historical, philosophical and other written works; and material works, such as free standing or relief sculptures, monuments, vases, coins and other artefacts. Work 1 of the works to be studied in Area of Study 2 is included as one of the prescribed works in this cultural study. This provides students with an initial point of engagement with this work and its broader cultural context. Through this cultural study students see that there are recurring concerns and ideas that preoccupied the people of the classical world, and that the expressions of these can be seen and analysed in works of different forms, genres and, in some cases, times.

Students analyse works pertaining to one of the following concerns of classical culture and its associated prescribed materials and short works:

* Classical identities
* Power and authority
* War and warfare

Classical identities

The ancient Greeks and Romans concerned themselves with issues of identity, questioning who they were and the nature of belonging. Classicists examine how these people viewed themselves and others. Classical identities can include masculine and feminine identities; the conceptions of barbarians and the ‘other’; the use of the past to form identity; the self-assured identity of 5th-century Athens; or the virtues to which ancient Romans aspired.

Power and authority

The classical world features many significant, and sometimes dramatic, shifts in power. Over time, the Greeks and Romans looked to various figures of authority, and pondered the nature of power and authority, both political and religious. Classicists examine how the Greek and Roman people viewed the authority of religion and the power of the gods and fate; relationships between groups within society; ideas of good government or bad government; and representations of how power and authority are wielded through, for example, autocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny.

War and warfare

The classical world was often a world in conflict and war was an immediate concern for many people. Classicists examine depictions of war and warfare in the classical world. These can include depictions of wars and battles, representations of how war was waged, and expressions of different attitudes to and perspectives on war and warfare. Analysis of warfare includes different representations, both factual and mythical, of warriors and of conduct in war.

Students evaluate representations of a classical concern through analysis and comparison of the prescribed works. Among the prescribed works for this area of study is a designated Work 1 from the pair of works to be studied in Area of Study 2.

Students analyse how a range of classical works reflect and exemplify a concern of the classical cultural context. They examine key features of the socio-historical context in which each work was produced, and the authorship of the work and its purpose, considering how socio-historical context, authorial intent and purpose shape meaning.

Students analyse and compare key ideas related to the classical concern in works of different forms and genres, coming to see that there are overarching concerns in classical culture. They see evidence of continuity or change and form a deeper understanding of the classical world and the perspectives of its people.

A classical concern and related prescribed works are selected from the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). Works will appear on the list for a minimum of two years and a maximum of four years.

Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse and evaluate expressions of a classical concern and its significance in classical culture.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

Key knowledge

* the key features of works related to a classical concern, including authorship, subject matter or narrative and their form or genre
* the key features of the socio-historical context of works related to a classical concern, such as the historical, social, cultural, political and intellectual climate, and beliefs and values expressed in the prescribed works
* the key ideas expressed in prescribed works in relation to a classical concern
* similarities and differences between the socio-historical contexts, key ideas and genres of prescribed works in relation to a classical concern.

Key skills

* analyse key features of prescribed works such as authorship, subject matter or narrative, and their form or genre
* evaluate the relationship between prescribed works and their socio-historical context in relation to a classical concern and the similarities and difference between works over time
* evaluate key ideas expressed in prescribed works in relation to a classical concern
* evaluate the significance of individual prescribed works in representing a classical concern
* evaluate similarities and differences in the expression of key ideas related to a classical concern
* evaluate expressions of a concern of the classical world and its significance in understanding classical culture, using relevant evidence from the prescribed works.

Area of Study 2

Classical comparisons

* How do different socio-historical contexts influence classical works?
* What are the key ideas in two selected classical works?
* Which techniques are used to convey ideas in classical works?
* What does a comparison of ideas and techniques reveal about the classical works?

In this area of study students undertake an in-depth comparative study of two written classical works. As part of Area of Study 1, they examined how Work 1 of the pairing expressed an overarching concern of classical culture, providing them with an initial point of engagement with that work as a product of the time in which it was created. Having developed an understanding of the socio-historical context of that work and a sense of its place within broader classical culture in its expression of a classical concern, in Area of Study 2 students engage more deeply with that work. They closely analyse its presentation of key ideas beyond the concern encountered in Area of Study 1. They compare it with a second work, designated Work 2. Students compare the treatment of key ideas and techniques, and the features and contexts of these works.

In their examination and comparison of the techniques used to present ideas in classical works, students focus on the likely intention of the classical authors and how their contemporary audience would have perceived the works, rather than the interpretation of modern audiences. The classical concern studied in Area of Study 1 should be considered where relevant, but analysis must focus on a wider range of key ideas presented in the works.

Students examine and compare the techniques used to present ideas in classical works. The focus is on techniques that reflect the likely intention of the original author that remain evident in works in translation. Examples of techniques for consideration can be found in the Terms used in this study section on   
[pages 14–16](#Terms).

The genre of a classical work shapes its meaning. Classical authors use a wide range of techniques to convey ideas depending on the genre of the work. Students become familiar with the conventions of the written genres studied and the techniques used with each. Analysis and comparison of how the techniques of each genre add to the impact of the work lead to a deeper understanding of the choices that the classical author has made in presenting ideas.

Each genre has distinguishing features. Poetry, tragedy, comedy and satire are written in verse. Philosophy and history are written in prose and may also use dialogue. Epic and tragedy almost always focus on characters and events from myths and legends. Greek comedy derides characters who are part of the author’s contemporary culture, while Roman comedy uses stock characters to mock different positions in society. History involves historical figures but treats the subject matter with more gravity than comedy or satire. Historical narrative can have a particular logical and didactic quality that is different from what occurs in other genres; satire often has a sarcastic tone. Some genres are intended to be viewed by a large and live audience, and others to be read by a learned audience. Some are associated with specific techniques and conventions. For example, Greek tragedy and comedy have choruses, while epic uses repeated epithets and formulae that are typical of oral poetry that was only later written down.

Students situate the works they study within their socio-historical contexts, linking them to the place and time in which they were produced. They form their understanding of socio-historical context by first situating the author, their purpose and their intended audiences. They also situate the works in the wider socio-historical setting of developments, events and features of the classical society in which they were produced.

This knowledge of socio-historical context; that is, positioning the works in relation to the ideas and values of their specific time, place, and cultural conditions; supports students in deepening their understanding of classical works and the world in which they were produced.

Paired written works are selected from the VCE Classical works list published annually in the [*VCAA Bulletin*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/news-and-events/bulletins-and-updates/bulletin/Pages/index.aspx). Each pair of written works appears on the list for a minimum of two years and a maximum of four years.

Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to compare and evaluate the key ideas and the techniques in two classical works and evaluate the relationships between these works and their socio-historical contexts.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

Key knowledge

* the features of two classical works, including genre characteristics, plot, narrative, key characters and figures and relevant background information
* the socio-historical contexts of two classical works, including the authors, their purpose, their intended audiences and known historical, social, cultural and political settings at the time of the work’s creation
* the relationship between the paired classical works and the classical concern studied in Area of Study 1
* the relationship between two classical works and their socio-historical contexts
* the key ideas expressed in two classical works
* techniques used to express ideas in two classical works
* the reasons for similarities and differences between two classical works, including genre, authorship, authorial intention and perspective, and influence of socio-historical context.

Key skills

* analyse features of two classical works, including authorship, subject matter, narrative and genre
* evaluate the relationship between two classical works and their socio-historical contexts and apply understandings of the similarities and/or differences of the classical concern studied in Area of Study 1
* evaluate the key ideas in two classical works, the techniques used to express those ideas and the connections between the works and their socio-historical contexts
* evaluate the significance of genre and the socio-historical context to the presentation of ideas
* evaluate similarities and differences in the presentation of the key ideas in two classical works, considering the techniques used to present those ideas and the connections between the works and their socio-historical contexts
* construct a comparative argument in response to a topic, comparing and evaluating the key ideas and techniques in two classical works and using relevant evidence from the prescribed works.

School-based assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

Assessment of levels of achievement

School-assessed Coursework

The student’s level of achievement in Unit 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes Support materials for this study, which include advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student’s level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher’s assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Outcomes | Marks allocated | Assessment tasks |
| **Outcome 1**  Analyse and evaluate expressions of a classical concern and its significance in classical culture. | **50** | Assessment task types undertaken in Unit 3 are not to be repeated in Unit 4.  At least one of the following assessment tasks is to be completed for Outcome 1.   * a research report * an oral presentation * short answer and/or structured questions * an extended response. |
| **Outcome 2**  Compare and evaluate the key ideas and the techniques in two classical works and evaluate the relationships between these works and their socio-historical contexts. | **50** | At least one of the following assessment tasks is to be completed for Outcome 2. The task(s) undertaken for Outcome 1 cannot be undertaken for Outcome 2.   * an essay * an extended response * a written analysis * short answer and/or structured questions.   Teachers may choose to select one or more assessment tasks for each outcome. |
| **Total marks** | **100** |  |

External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination.

End-of-year examination

Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

Description

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

Conditions

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

* Duration: 2 hours.
* Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA.
* VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [*VCE Administrative Handbook*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/vce-vcal-handbook/Pages/index.aspx).
* The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

Further advice

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format(s) and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Unit 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.