

CLASSICS

Curriculum Statement



Intent

The Classics curriculum aims to:

- provide lessons and opportunities in Latin and Ancient History that enable students to experience a **balance** of the joy and fun of learning another language and history with the dedication, **intellect** and **knowledge** required to become clear **communicators**.

The Classics curriculum is designed to:

- develop confident linguists and historians who are able to **think** on the spot, manipulate structures and communicate spontaneously. Classics students are **courageous** and **take risks**. They aren't afraid to make mistakes, but instead **reflect** upon them and learn from them.

The Classics curriculum supports students to:

- facilitate international understanding and create caring, **empathetic** students who are open-minded and principled about cultural differences, and who are inquisitive about and appreciate a wealth of cultural and historical heritage.

Implementation

a) Content & Skills

KS3

- In KS3 the Latin language is introduced incrementally to help students focus on translation technique. Throughout KS3 the stories in Latin are linked to the civilisation topics to help students build a vivid picture of life in the Roman world, and to use logic and intuition to create translations in fluent, natural English. All of the civilisation elements are examined in the context of the modern world to give students a sense of context and continuity.
- Over Year 7 students are gradually introduced to each noun case, and all present tense verb endings, including the verb "to be", the infinitive and the imperative. Year 7 civilisation starts with an overview of Roman society for context. We then start in the Roman *domus* and gradually move further out to explore various aspects of a typical Roman town, comparing the lives of rich and poor, slaves and citizens, and the role of women in society.
- In Year 8 students develop their understanding of verbs, meeting new tenses, irregular verbs, and participles, while also learning how to approach translation of subordinate clauses.
- With the background knowledge of Roman culture developed in Year 7, students in Year 8 start in the city of Rome and learn about Roman education, completing a diploma comparing ancient heroes with heroes from the modern world. They then move away from Rome exploring other places of key historical interest: they see the eruption of Vesuvius, life in Roman Britain, and then end in the cultural and intellectual melting pot of Alexandria.
- In Year 9 students reflect on how the places visited in Year 8 came to be under Roman control, using the themes of Domination, Assimilation and Propaganda. Students develop their ability to analyse primary sources to uncover what the

Romans thought about the different cultures and societies they encountered and conquered. This is a key skill for studying Ancient History at GCSE.

- The vocabulary used in Year 9 is a simplified version of the GCSE word list to help prepare students for the Eduqas Latin course. The main focus of language work in Year 9 is to improve students' confidence in creating accurate and smooth translations.
- At the end of Year 9 students are encouraged to take Latin (as a 2nd language or as an additional option) and Ancient History (EBacc) at GCSE.

KS4

- GCSE Latin - Eduqas. The course is a mixture of Language, Literature and Roman Civilisation, incorporating a range of skills as well as breadth of content. The set texts studied are introduced in increasing order of difficulty, while grammar points are developed alongside this to help students' understanding. Further context is given by the civilisation topic "Daily Life in a Roman Town". As well as practising comprehension and straight translation, students of Latin are taught a variety of skills: how to answer stylistic analysis questions of Latin text; how to write synoptic, thematic essays; how to write essays comparing the Roman world with our own.
- GCSE Ancient History - OCR. This course teaches the students skills on how to analyse and evaluate primary sources. They must be able to give a concise and detailed explanation on a variety of topics across the ancient world. Students start by studying the Persian kings, culminating in a depth study of Pericles and 5th century Athenian democracy. In Year 11 students explore what was happening in Rome at the same time by studying the Roman kings and formation of the Roman Republic. The second depth study examines the rise of Cleopatra at the end of the Republic and enables students to consider the question of gender and power in the ancient world.

KS5

IB Latin:

- Students are initially taught advanced grammar to help bridge the gap between GCSE and IB. Students at both Higher and Standard level are then gradually introduced to passages of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to translate unseen. Students develop dictionary skills, techniques to break down the passages into simple chunks, and how to spot and translate grammatical constructions to end up with a smooth translation at the end.
- For Paper 2 students study Virgil, Livy and Caesar, and are taught how those authors use style and technique to bring their works to life; as the course progresses, students will be able to spot these stylistic devices themselves, and explain their effect. Students at Higher level are also given secondary literature and further context in order to develop a deeper understanding of the key themes of each author.
- All students produce an annotated dossier of primary sources designed to address a research question of their own choosing. Students at Higher level are also encouraged to write their Extended Essay on Classics. Both of these assignments are especially effective at preparing students for the independent research which will be required of them at Undergraduate level.

IB Classical Greek and Roman Studies:

- This subject teaches students to enjoy and appreciate ancient art, literature and history. The topics have been chosen to provide an engaging and broad curriculum.
- Students start the course by learning about the different styles of Greek vases, and the myths painted on them. Through these myths, students are then introduced to

Greek Tragedy and the wider context of 5th Century Athens. From here, students see the influence Greece had on Ovid through the themes in his *Metamorphoses*, and finally students take a more historical approach to the world in which Ovid was writing by examine Augustus' rise to power.

- All students produce an annotated dossier of primary sources designed to address a research question of their own choosing. This task is especially effective at preparing students for the independent research which will be required of them at Undergraduate level.

b) Learning environment

- In Years 7-8 students are grouped in form classes, typically of 32 students with a wide range of abilities and needs.
- In Year 9 students are in smaller classes of around 25, grouped according to their first language (with input from the DoS and SAM to try to create the optimal teaching groups.) Groups still have a wide range of abilities and needs.
- In GCSE Latin students can opt to take Latin as their second language or as an option subject. Ancient History students can opt to take the subject as their humanity choice as it is an EBacc subject. Classes are typically around 26 students (though the Latin Option class, if it runs, is usually a significantly smaller class of higher achieving students.)
- Students who take Latin at IB must have taken it at GCSE, with a requirement of a level 7 at GCSE to be in the Higher Latin class. To select Classical Greek and Roman Studies there is no prior knowledge required, however students must have attained at least a level 5 in English. These classes vary in size, but there are typically no more than 15 students.
- We expect the students to follow the non-negotiable rules that are in every classroom as well as following the classroom rules of their subject teacher. Praise is given in the form of merits, stickers and good notes. whereas detentions are given for poor behaviour, lack of classwork, or homework not being completed. Contact is made with parents or guardians through the planner, email, phone calls or by letter.
- There are numerous extracurricular opportunities for students. Years 12 and 13 are encouraged to be Classics Prefects: they help with open evenings, Latin Clinic and Classics Club as well as helping to arrange and organise display boards.
- Students also are invited to lectures by universities and staff as well as visits to plays and museums. KS3 and KS4 students are invited to Classics Club and Latin Clinic, as well as being involved in any lectures that are appropriate for them.
- Students from Years 8-13 are also invited to attend the annual Classics trip to places such as the Bay of Naples, Rome, Sicily and Greece.

c) Assessment & Feedback

- As there is a wide range of content covered the Department has a range of techniques for marking and delivering feedback according to the task. For civilisation work, teachers give comments, WWW/EBI. Translations are comment-marked according to the targeted grammar point. Where tasks are set for completion on Google Classroom, rubrics are used.
- KS4/5 work is marked according to marking criteria provided by the exam boards.
- Students are encouraged to use comment marking to develop their own targets so they can clarify the next steps they need to take in order to progress.
- All work is recorded in teacher's mark books. In subjects with multiple teachers (KS3 and Latin KS4) common markbooks are kept for key elements of assessment in each term.

d) Monitoring

Students are monitored in the following ways:

- Common mark books.
- In KS4 and KS5, teachers are responsible for the assessment of their own classes. The HoD is able to see how they are doing by report data and discussion of grades in Department meetings. As there are only three teachers we are also able to discuss students through general daily discussion.
- Observations are done through Performance Management and at least one other time during the year. These are done by all members of staff.
- Learning walks are encouraged - the HoD regularly pops into lessons to do quick, informal book checks, and to keep an eye on students' progress. Other members of the department are encouraged to visit each other and the HoD for learning walks as well.
- Work scrutiny is done during Department meetings where the books of a year group are compared to see if the marking is matching the policy. All members of staff share positive feedback, and areas for improvement are commented on. This is also done to see that there is consistency throughout a Key Stage group in regards to assessment.
- The HoD also checks the grades prior to the reports going out to check that the marks are consistent throughout a year group.
- At KS3 if students are underperforming we put them into Latin Clinic to work with sixth form students to improve their learning and skills. At KS4 students making less than expected progress attend booster sessions to work on the appropriate skills. At KS5, if needed, students are given one-on-one help and booster sessions. All parents or guardians are contacted to make them aware of the intervention and are kept up to date on progress.
- SEAN students are noted on the context sheets and provisions are put in place for them in the lessons and for assessment and homework, depending on the student.

Impact

The 2019 exam results show that:

- 70.2% of students in GCSE Latin gained a grade 7 to 9 and 51.3% gained grades 8-9.
- 52.8% of students in GCSE Ancient History gained a grade 7-9.
- 100% of students in Latin Higher and Standard at IB gained a grade 4-7.
- 100% of students in CGRS Standard gained a grade 5-7, and 66% of the class gained a grade 7.
- In the previous years we have had a number of students studying Classics at University. Popular destinations are Cambridge, Oxford and Reading. Subjects studied vary between Latin, Ancient History, Archaeology and Classical Civilisation. Many of our students carry on to complete master degrees.
- We believe that our students are well prepared for University and leave Bexley Grammar with a love of the subject.
- Before the pandemic the Classics Department was involved with the PTI for several years and was awarded the mark every year; we intend to continue working with this charity.

- Our students have to study a wide range of language, grammar and primary sources throughout the Key Stages. Students develop dictionary skills, and the ability to read grammar tables. They expand their English vocabulary by considering the derivation of English words from Latin. Students engage with great Roman authors, both in translation and in the original language, from the poetry of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*, to the histories of Livy and Caesar; students also read sources from Greece, such as Herodotus, and Ancient Historians study objects and texts from the Middle East. All of this provides an excellent foundation for students' understanding and appreciation of British culture, and also allows them to develop the skills to understand and appreciate the diversity of other cultures.

COVID Impact & Catch Up

In Year 7 the scheme of work has been adapted to keep the benefits of the grammatical rigour of the new Imperium course and the more logical sequence of grammar encountered, but has been blended with the vocabulary, civilisation topics, and stories of the Cambridge Latin Course. By spreading the civilisation topics throughout the year rather than having them all at the start (as we had it in the previous scheme of work) we will be able to introduce the language at a more gentle pace, and ensure that no students are left behind, while also allowing increased practice of Literacy skills by reading more primary sources and creating pieces of civilisation work in English.

In Year 8 we have again kept the "best bits" from the Imperium course to help students' overall understanding of the language. We are starting the year with an increased focus on language catch-up work to make sure all students have a firm grasp of concepts covered in Year 7. During lockdown we found that teaching the tenses (usually done in Y9) was accessible to the students and hugely beneficial, enabling them to move onto more advanced stories. We have therefore added this into the Year 8 SoW, merging Imperium with the Cambridge Latin Course. This again adds a more interesting range of Classical Civilisation topics to keep students engaged.

The Year 9 Course, which has always been based on the Cambridge Latin Course, now follows on more smoothly from Year 7 and 8, and we have moved our language practice to the first half of the Autumn term to quickly catch any knowledge gaps created by COVID. As the Cambridge Latin Course has a wider range of accessible online learning activities, these changes to KS3, and especially Year 7 and 8, mean that we will be able to switch to online learning more easily should the need arise in the future, and give students a wider range of ways to learn the language.

Latin Clinics will run for a select number of students throughout the year, taught by Classics Prefects using resources provided by teachers from the department. Our focus will be on how students approach translation, and will give them the extra exposure to the language which they may have missed at the height of the pandemic.

In Latin at KS4 our delivery of Literature topics to Year 11 went well, so our focus will be on practising language skills through regular vocab drills and immersion in the language through Unseen stories. In Year 10 we may need to spend more time than in previous years reviewing the basics of language work, given our focus on teaching civilisation topics during lockdown. However this should not affect students' overall progress. As with previous years we will be running language clinics for any students making less than expected progress.

In Ancient History at KS4, with the removal of the Cleopatra topic, we have made time in our SoW to revise the topics which were covered during the peak of lockdown. More focus is being given to exam skills to make sure students don't lose marks because of an unfamiliarity with the requirements of the exam questions, which vary significantly between

the long period studies (Greece & Persia and Rome) and the shorter case study (Alexander the Great).

In Latin at KS5, in Year 13 we are running after school booster sessions to help underperforming students revise work we covered last year. In Year 12 we are putting a much greater focus on bridging the language gap between GCSE and IB.

In Ancient History at KS5, in Year 13 one topic has been removed (Augustan Rome) and therefore there is time dedicated in the SoW to revise the topic covered mostly in lockdown (Athenian Vases). As no prior knowledge is required to take this subject, the only potential issues that might arise in Year 12 from COVID are students' exam skills and general literacy levels, though both of these issues will be addressed naturally in the teaching of the course.

Despite the impact of COVID, 2 students were awarded places at Russell Group universities to study Classics, including one at Cambridge.