

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
- Examining board: Eduqas
- The course is a mixture of Language, Literature and Roman Civilisation, incorporating a range of skills as well as breadth of content.
- Students learn a prescribed list of vocabulary, grammar and syntax to enable them to answer comprehension questions, and translate longer passages from Latin into English. Throughout the year students practise using passages about Greek and Roman history and mythology.
- The set texts studied are introduced in increasing order of difficulty, while grammar points are developed alongside this to help students' understanding. Set texts are linked by a theme and changed regularly by the exam board, but past topics have included, "Travel by Land and Sea", "Books and Writers" & "Love & Marriage".
- Further context is given by a civilisation topic in which students learn about the life of ordinary Romans; the overall theme is changed regularly by Eduqas, but past topics have included "Entertainment", "Daily life in a Roman Town", & "Roman Family Life". 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
- Examining Board: OCR
- This course teaches the students 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. By reading the words of ancient historians, examining archaeological remains and physical sources, students learn how to interpret them to build a picture of the past, and ask not just what happened, but why. Topics are liable to change, but past topics studied have been: the Persian kings, Pericles & 5th century Athenian democracy, Alexander the Great, the early kings of Rome and Cleopatra. Students are encouraged to examine our own social, political and cultural values through the lens of 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 increasingly difficulty from a wide range of authors. 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. They will also gain a deeper understanding of the wide variety of styles and genres Roman literature offers.
- For Paper 2 students study a passage of Virgil's Aeneid, while Higher Level students also study an extract from a speech of Cicero. They 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 have the opportunity to produce a very short piece of their own Latin, designed to convince, inform or entertain (or all three!).
- All students produce an annotated dossier of primary sources designed to address a research question of their own choosing. Students at Higher level are 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.

b) Learning environment

- In Years 7-8 students are grouped in form classes, typically of 30 students in Year 7 and 32 students in Year 8 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.
- 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.
- 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 10-13 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 use the reporting grades of E, V, G, I & C, along with written feedback. Translations are marked according to the targeted grammar point. Longer pieces of written work are marked using specific rubrics or mark schemes.
- 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.
- Students with SEN 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

- We continue to send Classicists to top Universities on a regular basis. Popular destinations are Cambridge, Oxford, Warwick, UCL 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 School 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; the IB Latin course encourages students to read a wide variety of authors both from the established canon, and from lesser known, but fascinating authors. 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 a range of cultures.