

Latin

OCR A-level Latin (H443)

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Introduction

Latin A-level requires students to continue to explore both the language and literature in a more sophisticated and extensive fashion. Building on the already firm foundations of GCSE, a more advanced range of vocabulary, accidence and syntax is introduced; students' language knowledge is applied via an increasingly more complex yet fulfilling variety of tasks. Alongside the detailed study of prose and verse literature set texts, appropriate historical and literary backgrounds are also explored, broadening students' understanding of both the life and culture of the Roman life.

Subject Requirements

Students will need at least a Grade 8 in GCSE Latin. Grade 8 in GCSE English Literature is also recommended, as extended written responses are required in each of the literature papers and strong essay writing skills are therefore very advantageous.

Course Outline

There are 4 components: 2 x Language (50%) and 2 x Literature (50%). Each component is examined separately.

- **Component 1: Unseen Translation:** (33%) Students are required to translate a passage of both Ovid (verse) and Livy (prose), and must be able to scan two lines of verse.

There is a defined vocabulary list but students will also be expected to have a knowledge of a wider range of vocabulary.

- **Component 2: Comprehension or Composition:** (17%) This paper tests either understanding of an unseen passage of Latin prose or the ability to write a short passage of English into Latin. For the comprehension option candidates will be given comprehension questions, short passages of translation, and accidence and syntax questions.
- **Component 3: Prose Literature:** (25%) Students will study an extract from one of Cicero's speeches (a famous Roman orator and politician who witnessed the fall of the Republic) and an extract from the ancient historian Tacitus' account of the Roman republic and Empire. The wider context of politics in the Republic and Empire is explored as well as the skill of Cicero and Tacitus. In the examination, students will need to demonstrate knowledge of the English translation and wider context of the speech as well as critically analyse the style of the author, characterisation and meaning.
- **Component 4: Verse Literature:** (25%) Students initially study Book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid*, one of the most important texts to have survived from Ancient Rome. They will explore the poetical skill of Virgil as well as the political context of the work and to what extent it should be viewed as propaganda for Emperor Augustus' reign. Students will also study selections from Book 2 of Ovid's *Fasti*, a work in which he aims to describe the Roman year and its religious festivals, and trace their ritual elements back to their legendary origins. In the examination, students will need to demonstrate knowledge of the English translation and wider context of the poem as well as critically analyse the style of the author, characterisation and meaning.

Higher Education and Careers

Latin is looked upon very favourably by universities and employers due to the transferable skills developed throughout this rigorous course: literary analysis, critical thinking, linguistic code-breaking, reasoning and extended response.

University degrees in Classics are hugely valued by employers and the courses on offer are extremely varied e.g. Latin, Classical Studies, Archaeology, Ancient History, Classical Greek etc. On completion of a Classics degree, many choose to enter the legal profession or world of finance, but the skills acquired allow a diverse range of careers to be widely accessible.

What should I study alongside Latin?

Latin complements a wide range of other subjects, from modern languages, English, History and Religious Studies to the sciences, Maths and Music.