

# Classical Languages: Latin and Greek

## A level

### What will I study and learn?

**Latin:** You will read two prose works, with the current selection including a speech from the great Roman orator and statesman, Cicero, and one of the earliest examples of the novel, *Metamorphosis* by the North African writer Apuleius. You will also read a section of Virgil's epic poem, *The Aeneid*, telling the story of Aeneas's battle to found a new city in Italy. You will revise the grammar covered at GCSE and study some new topics.

**Greek:** You will read two prose works, either Thucydides's description of the stories during the Peloponnesian War, or a philosophic tract from Plato covering love, life, death and everything beyond. You will also read verse passages from Greek theatre, either the great tragedies of Euripides or Sophocles, or the ribald comedy of Aristophanes. You will revise the grammar covered up to GCSE and study some new topics.

### How will I be assessed?

#### Paper 1

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- Testing unseen translations of texts chosen from a range of prose authors and a specified verse unseen author.

#### Paper 2

Papers 1 and 2 make up 50% of the final A level mark

- 1 hour 15 minutes
- Testing comprehension of the language, or an optional composition paper testing translation into Greek or Latin.

#### Paper 3

Prose literature text

- 2 hours.

#### Paper 4

Verse literature text

- 2 hours
- Testing understanding and context of the literature.

## A level/IB

It is possible to study Classics at many universities without Greek or Latin A level, but you will be at a strong advantage if you have studied one or both languages. The IB qualification is particularly attractive for those who may study or work abroad in the future, as well as providing greater breadth of study than A level.

Latin provides strong support for university applications in English, Modern Languages, Law, Archaeology and History. Greek is particularly useful for English, Philosophy, Law and Theology. Classical languages are often studied alongside the sciences and can help in medical training. Latin and Greek are respected as particularly difficult subjects, and the skills you develop will be useful in a wide range of courses at university and for employment generally.

Most lessons will involve reading Greek or Latin. Some tasks will be done in pairs or small groups, but there will mainly be whole-class instruction and individual work.

Language study will involve looking at sentences in detail as well as translating extended passages of Latin or Greek. A number of your lessons will focus on literature – the IB course covers more than the A level course – discussing the themes and style of the texts within their historical contexts. Independent study will require completion of written tasks, often translations, a little reading and frequent consolidation of the work covered in lessons.

### Entry requirements

A GCSE in the appropriate language(s) is required and you should achieve a minimum of a grade 7 for A level or the IB higher level course; 6 is a minimum grade for the IB standard level subject.



## IB

### What will I study?

Latin and Classical Greek share the same syllabus outline and assessment model at IB, and both can be studied at SL or HL. Both the SL and HL courses share elements, including authors and options, but the differences are reflected both in the breadth of study and in the level of knowledge and skills expected at assessment. A greater amount of literature is covered at HL than at SL.

**Latin:** The language paper is based on an unseen author and there are questions to demonstrate understanding of the language and the text itself. The literature options for study in this section are comprised of readings taken from one or more authors. The author for this cycle of examinations will be Virgil's epic *The Aeneid*, with extracts from book 2. Finally, there is a research dossier where, with annotations of primary sources in the classical language, students demonstrate they understand their contents.

**Greek:** Your unseen author will be Xenophon. Literature options for study in this section are comprised of readings taken from one or more authors, with two options chosen from a diverse selection ranging from Homer's epic *The Iliad*, history, tragedy and scientific knowledge.

### How will I be assessed?

Paper 1	Paper 2	Composition (HL only)	Annotated research dossier
Papers 1 and 2 make up 70% of the final mark for SL and 60% for HL		20%	30% at SL and 20% at HL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90 minutes at SL and HL</li> <li>Tests unseen translation of texts; dictionaries may be used for this</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90 minutes at SL and HL</li> <li>Tests understanding and context of the literature options chosen.</li> </ul>	Students submit an original composition in prose Latin or Classical Greek guided by intentions and informed by classical sources and additional research. Alongside this, students submit a rationale of no more than ten entries that explains how the composition achieved the stated intentions.	Of primary source materials (7–9 at SL and HL) relating to a topic in classical history, literature, language, religion, mythology, art, archaeology, or some aspect of classical influence.

### Want to know more?

**A level:** Mr Daniel Watkins  
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Exam Board:  
[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)  
[www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

“At A level you delve more into the mechanics of the language, building a deeper understanding of Greek as a concept, not just a language. We have been looking at culture, ancient literature and the language recently. The teachers are immensely supportive to help you succeed.

Oliver Stubbs, OB 2019

Courses: Greek, Mathematics,  
Further Mathematics, and Physics