

A Level

Latin

OCR



Studying Latin involves ... studying Latin. Students will build on their knowledge of the language gained at GCSE to cover a wider range of vocabulary and more complex sentence structures. Further, they will study a more extensive range of verse and prose set texts where, in addition to working out what the Latin means (and more importantly how it comes to mean it), students will study the literary merits of the texts and the context in which they came to be written.

Course Content

The two qualifications comprise the following exams:

Year 1

AS Latin comprises two papers:

Language: This paper is divided into two sections – first, translation of a passage of unseen Latin prose into English; and second a series of comprehension questions based on a passage of unseen Latin prose.

Literature: Students are examined on their detailed study of two set texts, one verse and one prose. Questions will include comprehension questions, translation, analysis of the literary merits and a short essay based on the text as a whole. The texts students study in their first year will be a selection of the erotic poems of Ovid, Propertius and Tibullus and an extract from Cicero's defence of the notorious gang leader, Milo.

Year 2

A Level Latin comprises four papers:

Unseen Translation: Two passages to translate – one of prose, one of verse; plus a couple of lines of scansion for those who know what this is.

Prose Comprehension: Students will tackle a short translation and answer comprehension and grammar questions based on a passage of unseen Latin prose.

Prose Literature: This paper comprises three sections. Section A and B are made up of comprehension, translation and analysis questions based on a short passage taken from each of the set texts. These will comprise the Cicero text studied in the first year and a selection from Tacitus' Annals, chronicling the first few years of the reign of Tiberius and which will be studied in the second year.



Verse Literature: As for Prose Literature ... only read "Verse". In addition to the Ovid, Propertius and Tibullus studied in Year One, students will study extracts from Book 10 of Virgil's Aeneid on which the Section C essay will also be based.

Methods of Teaching

Students will work as a class, in small groups and individually. The "Language" aspects of the course will mainly be delivered, particularly at first, using a didactic approach – in short, we will look to explain how the language works, not just what particular words mean. Increasingly as they become confident in the language, students will be helped to produce their own translations of "unseen" passages, whilst there should also be some scope for translating English into Latin. The "Literature" aspects will comprise a mixture of didactic to ensure students understand the texts, but also teacher-led discussion of them as pieces of literature rather than as a chunk of a foreign language for translation. Here students will be actively encouraged to offer their own personal responses to the material. We place great emphasis on students' taking responsibility for their own workload.

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Methods and Patterns of Assessment

Latin is not the easiest subject a student can choose in that there aren't too many convenient short cuts. It does require a good power of recall and loads of discipline as grammar and vocabulary are committed to memory. There will be regular exercises to test this – think Hermione Granger! Further, students will practice the type of questions they will face in each of the units; where appropriate, such questions will be assessed according to the guidelines laid down by A level subject examiners.

Financial Implications

Each student will be provided with essential reading material to support their study, either on paper or by way of the subject intranet. We also hope to be able to lend students essential grammar books and lexicons for use whilst on the course. In addition to their own materials for note-taking, tackling unseen and essay writing, students will be expected to provide their own copies of the set texts (plus they may wish to acquire translations of the whole work) – these are not always the cheapest, although we will aim to use “value for money” edition, designed specifically to be particularly student friendly. The college has a Student Support Fund which may be able to help students in financial difficulty. Students looking to extend their reading in the subject will be welcome to borrow through College a range of texts and commentaries. Subject to their taking place, students of Latin would be invited to join the Classical Civilisation trips to Italy or Greece – these would be of particular interest to students looking to take a Classics-oriented course at university. Such trips cost in the region of £750

Career Possibilities

Latin is widely accepted (and in many cases positively admired) for university entrance whether or not students continue their studies in it or related subjects – in short, it is seen to be an academically challenging subject. Whilst there are few, if any, careers which will enable students to make direct use of their Latin, the skills and disciplines needed to succeed in the subject are widely admired by a diverse range of potential employers.

Minimum Entry Requirements

5 GCSEs at Grades A* - C including English and Maths plus at least Grade B in Latin GCSE, if taken (or to have shown, by arrangement, language skills to a comparable standard)

Apply online: www.psc.ac.uk/apply t: 01962 857555 e: admissions@psc.ac.uk

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