



Why offer Classics?

Classical subjects are currently undergoing a revival in UK schools; but why should your school join those putting Classics back on the curriculum?

Student Experience

Most students come to Classical subjects as new subjects: this makes them attractive to aspirational students, but also, as 'fresh' topics, they offer new opportunities to the whole ability range too. India Collins-Davies is a current student reading Classics and English at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford:

Classics is often perceived as a dry and outdated subject, but it took me less than one half term of my Classical Civilisation AS Level to be completely won over by the intellectually rewarding nature of the course, which was engaging in a way more "standard" subjects were not. Of all the subjects I studied before coming to Oxford, I feel it is the one which shaped me academically the most, and that I still feel the most passionately about. I also loved having the opportunity to study for a Classical Greek GCSE alongside my A Levels. It enhanced my experience of Classical Civilisation, but I also found that it improved the way I considered and analysed English grammar; invigorated my enthusiasm for modern languages; and gave me an extra way of looking at literary works from all periods. I only wish that Greek had been available to me earlier in my school career, so I and many more of my peers could have benefited from all the enjoyment and opportunity it has to offer.



HE Progression

For students wishing to progress onto Higher Education Classics qualifications can be extremely useful. Students not only acquire specific knowledge, but also important transferable skills such as analysing sources and developing independent, critical and evaluative approaches. They learn to formulate and support an argument and gain a valuable understanding of cultures very different to their own.

Classics qualifications are naturally particularly valued by Classics departments in UK universities, but it is not just Classics departments who value these subjects. The study of A Level Classics qualifications can often lead to the university-level study of Classics, Drama, English, History, History of Art, Philosophy and Politics, however, information from UCAS shows that students who studied Classical Civilisation went on to study in such diverse disciplines as Medicine, Veterinary Science and Chemistry! Classical Civilisation is listed on UCL's list of preferred A Level subjects and it is also listed on Trinity College, Cambridge's list of Generally Suitable Arts A-levels. It is also listed as a useful subject for degrees in Classical Studies and Philosophy in the Russell Group 'Informed Choices' document with ancient languages being mentioned as helpful for those wishing to study History.

Employability

It is not only those looking to attend university who benefit from the study of Classical subjects. As Dr Peter Jones (advisor to Classics For All) states:

... we know that those who have studied the ancient languages are never, in fact, short of job-offers. A top asset-manager recently told me that his firm always employed classicists: they sold more. If Richard Dawkins is right, that is because 'what Classics has always done is just teach people how to think.'
(Peter Jones, Taking The Long View)

From the proven ability to write a well-structured extended response to the acknowledgement of the views of others and a culturally sensitive approach to these, Classics puts students in an excellent position to seek employment opportunities.





Equality and Diversity

Classical subjects allow an amazing amount of scope for building Equality and Diversity into the curriculum. From women in the Ancient World, to the study of religious beliefs and ancient acts of intolerance the subject matter lends itself well to interesting and engaging discussions directly relevant to today's world:

'That is what is available through the study of the ancient world – the languages, literature, culture and history of the Western world's first literate civilisations, where, uninfluenced by Christianity or globalism or mass communication systems, men grappled with exactly the same issues that we do: life, death, gods, sex, love, family, children, education, the nature of the world, our origins and development, the past, money, health, status, other cultures, friendship, power, patriotism, politics, law, crime, justice, empire, war.'

(Peter Jones, Taking the Long View)

Literacy

With the official focus on literacy levels in recent years the study of the ancient world is becoming ever more popular and relevant. Not only do all Classics subjects involve extended writing, developing core essay and analysis skills, but the act of learning an ancient language can be invaluable in improving the English language skills of students:

'If you wanted to invent a language that would show you with crystal clarity how language basically worked, you would invent Latin. That is why those lucky enough to study it just to age 16 have valued it so highly. With Greek, it spins off into a rich study of the roots of the higher registers of our language, an ease with romance languages and complex modes of persuasive speech and argument.'

(Peter Jones, Taking the Long View)

What's on offer?

At OCR we offer Latin, Classical Greek, Ancient History and Classical Civilisation at GCSE, AS and A Level, as well as Entry Level qualifications in Latin and Classical Greek.



How do we help?

OCR are working with teachers and HE representatives to ensure that our Classics qualifications are accessible and well supported. We have designed not only clear specifications and reliable assessments, but also delivery guides, lesson elements and other resources which will be released throughout the lifespan of the qualifications.

We also have two dedicated Subject Specialists who oversee the qualifications and liaise with schools, teachers and HE Institutions. The Subject Specialists are always happy to receive feedback on our specifications or answer any questions which arise at any point in the year. More information can be found on the OCR website or via email at classics@ocr.org.uk.

You can also contact OCR via telephone on 01223 553998.

Who else can help?

Classics For All: <http://www.classicsforall.org.uk/>

The Classical Association: <http://www.classicalassociation.org/>

The Iris Project: <http://irisproject.org.uk/>

Association for Latin Teaching : <http://www.arlt.co.uk/>

