



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



*Rewarding Learning*

# GCSE subject criteria for classical subjects

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# Contents

Introduction.....	3
Aims and learning outcomes .....	3
Subject content .....	4
Assessment objectives .....	5
Scheme of assessment .....	6
Grade descriptions.....	6

## Introduction

1. GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in classical subjects. They provide the framework within which an awarding body creates the detail of the specification.
2. Specifications must also meet the regulators' general requirements, including the common and GCSE criteria as defined in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications* (QCA/04/1293).
3. Subject criteria are intended to:
  - help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
  - ensure that the rigour of GCSE is maintained
  - ensure that specifications facilitate progression to further study of classical subjects
  - help higher education institutions, employers and other stakeholders such as learners and parents/guardians know what has been studied and assessed.
4. Any GCSE specification that contains significant elements of classical subjects must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

## Aims and learning outcomes

5. GCSE specifications in classical subjects should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and to gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.
6. GCSE specifications in classical subjects must enable learners to:
  - actively engage in the process of enquiry into the classical world to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers
  - acquire, through studying a range of appropriate sources, knowledge and understanding of selected aspects of the classical world
  - develop awareness of the continuing influence of the classical world on later times, and of the similarities and differences between the classical world and later times

- develop and apply analytical and evaluative skills at an appropriate level
  - make an informed, personal response to the material studied.
7. All specifications in Latin and Classical Greek must, in addition, enable learners to develop an appropriate level of competence in the language studied, and a sensitive and analytical approach to language generally.

## **Subject content**

8. The content of GCSE specifications in classical subjects must reflect the learning outcomes.
9. GCSE specifications in classical subjects must allow learners to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding specified below.
10. GCSE specifications in classical civilisation must require learners to:
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the classical world in one or both of the following areas:
    - literature
    - society and values, including, where appropriate, art, architecture, archaeology, history and religion
  - study the specified content through appropriate material and literary sources, including, where appropriate, texts in translation
  - understand, interpret, analyse and evaluate appropriate classical sources, setting these in their contexts
  - present relevant information in a clear, concise and logical manner.
11. GCSE specifications in classical civilisation must require learners to study either Greek civilisation, or Roman civilisation, or a combination of both.
12. GCSE specifications in Latin and Classical Greek must require learners to:
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
    - vocabulary, morphology and syntax, in context

- the differences between inflected and uninflected languages, including word order
- the different ways in which ideas are expressed in English or Welsh or Irish as compared with Latin / Classical Greek (this must include translation of unprepared material from the original language)
- demonstrate understanding and appreciation of Latin / Classical Greek literature, studied in the original language, with reference to content, context and literary quality, and/or demonstrate understanding and appreciation of other sources related to society and values of the classical world through analysis, evaluation and response.

## Assessment objectives

13. All specifications in classical subjects must require candidates to demonstrate their ability to:

### Classical civilisation

Assessment objectives		% weighting
AO1	Recall, select and organise relevant knowledge of literature and its contexts and/or of society and values of the classical world	25–35
AO2	Demonstrate an understanding of literature and its contexts and/or of society and values of the classical world	25–35
AO3	Interpret, evaluate and respond to literature and its contexts and/or sources related to society and values of the classical world	35–45

### Latin and Classical Greek

Assessment objectives		% weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of language	45–55

AO2	Demonstrate an understanding and an appreciation of literature and/or other sources related to society and values of the classical world through analysis, evaluation and response	45–55
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## Scheme of assessment

14. GCSE specifications in classical civilisation must allocate 75% of the weighting to external assessment and a weighting of 25% to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.
15. GCSE specifications in Latin and Classical Greek must allocate 100% of the weighting to external assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.
16. Question papers in classical civilisation and Latin must be targeted at either the Foundation or Higher tier.
17. Questions papers for Classical Greek must be targeted at the full range of GCSE grades.

## Grade descriptions

18. Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.
19. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

## Classical civilisation

Grade	Description
A	<p>Candidates recall, select and organise relevant and detailed knowledge of the classical world. They demonstrate a thorough understanding of the customs, institutions, events and/or achievements of the classical world.</p> <p>They evaluate, interpret and construct an informed personal response to an author's ideas, opinions and literary techniques.</p> <p>They interpret, analyse and evaluate evidence in depth to reach reasoned and substantiated conclusions and, where appropriate, make perceptive comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>
C	<p>Candidates recall, select and organise relevant and sound knowledge of the classical world. They demonstrate a sound understanding of the customs, institutions, events and/or achievements of the classical world.</p> <p>They evaluate, interpret and offer a personal response to an author's ideas, opinions and literary techniques.</p> <p>They interpret and analyse evidence to draw relevant conclusions and, where appropriate, make reasoned comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>

F	<p>Candidates recall, select and organise limited knowledge of the classical world. They demonstrate some understanding of the customs, institutions, events and/or achievements of the classical world.</p> <p>They offer a personal response at a basic level to interpret an author's ideas, opinions and literary techniques.</p> <p>They select and use evidence, draw simple conclusions and, where appropriate, make simple comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>
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### Latin and Classical Greek

Grade	Description
A	<p>Candidates demonstrate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of the meaning (and use, where applicable,) of vocabulary and grammatical constructions.</p> <p>They have a detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of prescribed texts in the original language. They make an informed personal response to an author's ideas, opinions and literary techniques.</p> <p>They demonstrate a detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of the customs, institutions, events and achievements of the classical Greek/Roman world.</p> <p>They evaluate evidence in depth to draw informed conclusions and, where appropriate, make perceptive comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>



C	<p>Candidates demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the meaning (and use, where applicable,) of vocabulary and grammatical constructions.</p> <p>They have a sound knowledge and understanding of prescribed texts in the original language. They identify narrative aspects and appreciate simple points of style.</p> <p>They demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the customs, institutions, events and achievements of the classical Greek/Roman world.</p> <p>They analyse evidence to draw relevant conclusions and, where appropriate, make reasoned comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>
F	<p>Candidates demonstrate some basic knowledge and understanding of the meaning of vocabulary and of simple grammatical constructions.</p> <p>They have a basic knowledge and understanding of prescribed texts in the original language. They identify simple narrative aspects.</p> <p>They demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the customs, institutions, events and achievements of the classical Greek/Roman world.</p> <p>They select and use evidence, draw simple conclusions and, where appropriate, make simple comparisons between the classical world and later times.</p>