



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Rewarding Learning

GCE AS and A level subject criteria for classics

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1. Introduction

1.1 These subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all advanced subsidiary (AS) and advanced (A) level specifications in classics. They provide the framework within which the awarding body creates the detail of the specification.

Subject criteria are intended to:

- help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
- define the relationship between the AS and A level specifications, with the AS as a subset of the A level
- ensure that the rigour of A level is maintained
- help higher education institutions and employers know what has been studied and assessed.

Any specification in classics that contains significant elements of classical civilisation, Latin, Classical Greek or ancient history must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

2. Aims

2.1 AS and A level specifications in classics should encourage students to:

- develop an interest in, and enthusiasm for, the classical world
- acquire, through studying a range of appropriate sources, knowledge and understanding of selected aspects of classical civilisation
- 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.

2.2 All specifications in Latin and Classical Greek or specifications that contain significant elements of these subjects should in addition encourage students to:

- develop an appropriate level of competence in the language studied and a sensitive and analytical approach to language generally.

3. Subject content

3.1 AS and A level specifications in classics should build on the knowledge, understanding and skills specified for GCSE in the relevant subjects but prior attainment of a GCSE qualification in a classical subject should not be a requirement.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

3.2 AS and A level specifications in **classical civilisation** should require candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the classical world in at least three of the following areas (including at least two at AS level):

- architecture
- art
- archaeology
- history and politics
- literature
- philosophy, science and religion
- society and values.

3.3 AS and A level specifications in **classical civilisation** should require candidates to:

- study the specified areas through appropriate classical sources (including, where appropriate, texts in translation)
- understand classical values and concepts including those that have been of fundamental importance for the subsequent development of European civilisation
- understand, interpret, analyse, evaluate and use a range of evidence from appropriate classical sources, and set the material selected in its context
- present relevant information in a clear, concise and logical manner using appropriate terminology.

3.4 AS and A level specifications in **Latin/Classical Greek** should require candidates to:

- extend their knowledge of vocabulary and linguistic structures and their study of literature and literary techniques beyond that specified for GCSE through reading and studying texts in the original language
- demonstrate an understanding of the linguistic structures of material written by Latin/Classical Greek authors in the original language, the differences between inflected and uninflected languages and the different ways in which ideas are expressed in English or Welsh as compared with Latin/Classical Greek (this should include translation of unprepared material from the original language)

- understand and appreciate Latin/Classical Greek literature in the original language and have a critical awareness of its meaning, the authors' purposes and literary techniques, and the literary, social and historical context(s) as appropriate
- present relevant information in a clear, concise and logical manner using appropriate terminology.

3.5 AS and A level specifications in **ancient history** should require candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of significant events, issues, individuals, ideas and social and political movements of Greek and/or Roman history in at least three topics (including at least two studied at AS), for example:

- relations between Greek and non-Greek civilisations
- Athenian democracy and society
- the politics and culture of Periclean Athens
- the Peloponnesian war and its causes
- the politics and culture of late republican Rome
- the Age of Augustus
- the Julio-Claudians
- social and political developments in the Roman empire.

3.6 AS and A level specifications in **ancient history** should require candidates to:

- study the specified areas through relevant and appropriate literary, documentary and material evidence (including, where appropriate, texts in translation)
- demonstrate a sensitivity to past societies, showing an awareness of how classical values compare and contrast with those of the modern western world
- understand the nature of historical evidence and the methods used by historians in analysis and evaluation
- understand, interpret, analyse and evaluate historical evidence and events in their classical context
- present relevant information in a clear, concise and logical manner using appropriate terminology.

4. Key skills

4.1 AS and A level specifications in classics should provide opportunities for developing and generating evidence for assessing relevant key skills from the list below. Where appropriate these opportunities should be directly cross-referenced, at specified level(s), to the key skills standards, which may be found on the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk).

- Application of number
- Communication
- Improving own learning and performance
- Information and communication technology
- Problem solving
- Working with others

5. Assessment objectives

5.1 All candidates must meet the following assessment objectives. The assessment objectives are to be weighted in all specifications as indicated in the following table.

Assessment objectives		Weighting		
		AS level	A2 level	A level
AO1	Recall and deploy relevant knowledge and understanding of literary, cultural, material or historical sources or linguistic forms in their appropriate contexts.	45–55%	35–45%	40–50%
AO2a	Analyse, evaluate and respond to classical sources (literary, cultural, material, historical or linguistic) as appropriate.	45–55%	55–65%	50–60%
AO2b	Select, organise and present relevant information and argument in a clear, logical, accurate and appropriate form.			

5.2 At A level candidates will have studied a wider range of material and should be able to answer broader and more complex questions and to demonstrate a higher level of critical awareness.

5.3 The assessment objectives apply to the whole specification.

6. Scheme of assessment

Internal assessment

6.1 Assessment must be entirely through external assessment.

Synoptic assessment

6.2 Synoptic assessment should be included at A2 and draw on assessment objectives 1 and 2.

6.3 Synoptic assessment in classics involves the drawing together of candidates' knowledge and skills to demonstrate understanding of the links between central elements of study such as language, literature, civilisation or history in their classical contexts.

6.4 Examples of synoptic assessment in **classical civilisation** might include a study and evaluation of a Homeric epic poem or Roman town planning in their historical, religious, cultural and social contexts, or a comparative analysis of authors within or across genres.

6.5 Examples of synoptic assessment in **Latin** and **Classical Greek** might include linguistic analysis, analytical study and/or literary appreciation of part of a Latin/Classical Greek text, such as a section of a book of Virgil's *Aeneid* or Homer's *Iliad*, in its historical, religious, cultural and social context.

6.6 Examples of synoptic assessment in **ancient history** might include an assessment of a significant historical figure, event or development from a range of perspectives (such as political, military, social, cultural, economic), for instance the role of Pericles in Athenian development, or Augustus in the development from republic to empire, or a comparative analysis of motivation in the invasion and conquest of Britain by successive Romans.

Quality of written communication

6.7 AS and A level specifications will be required to assess the candidates' quality of written communication in accordance with the guidance document produced by QCA.