

A Level Classical Civilisation

Why choose this course?

“What have the Romans ever done for us?”... and the Greeks, while we are on the topic! It is difficult to deny that the stories, politics, religion and art that we are so familiar with today, do not have a clear link to these two classical civilisations. From O Brother, Where art Thou? James Joyce’s Ulysses, to the Simpsons; from the system of democracy to the rule of law, much of our culture and everyday lives are defined by these two great civilisations.

A Level Classical Civilisation has been designed to provide you with a broad, coherent and rewarding study of the literature and culture of the classical world. It offers the opportunity to investigate elements of the literature, visual/material culture and thought of the classical world and acquire an understanding of their social, historical and cultural contexts. You will explore aspects of ancient Greek and Roman culture, mythology, literature, philosophy and society.

In many respects ancient Greece and Rome were the harbingers of what we call “civilisation”. The combined effects of their culture have long inspired academics as well as interested readers to delve deeply into their culture. This course is an opportunity to explore the first great western civilisations and understand the impact they still have on western culture in particular, especially regarding language, philosophy and politics.

What will I learn?

The 3 modules comprising the A Level are as follows:

Module 1: ‘The World of the Hero’, an in depth study of Homer’s ‘Iliad’ and Virgil’s ‘Aeneid’;

The works of Homer are the foundation of the Western literary canon and the Greeks themselves considered them the cornerstone of Greek culture. With their unique composition, and exciting tales of gods and heroes, these works of literature form an excellent grounding for exploration of the classical world.

What will I be doing?

A close study of the composition and literary techniques employed in epics such as Homer’s Odyssey (or Iliad) and Virgil’s Aeneid

Module 2: Beliefs and Ideas:

Here you are given the opportunity to explore some of the ideas and ideals important not only to the ancient world but also to the modern one. From ideas about love to those about democracy, you will examine thought provoking and interesting concepts through study of religious ritual, and the role it played in society, alongside the functions and layout of famous temple complexes. We will also explore the nature of the gods and their relationship with mortals. Also included are the tensions caused by the rise of philosophical thought, led by those such as Socrates.

What will I be doing?

Use of analytical and evaluative skills to comprehend texts and sources to form ideas and understand the concepts of the civilisations being investigated.

Module 3: Culture and the Arts:

The study of the physical remains of the ancient world is crucial to a comprehensive understanding of it, From the study of theatres and vases depicting performances; Persian art and archaeological sites, to Roman coins and architecture.

What will I be doing?

Establishing a holistic approach to developing your learning by drawing together ideas, concepts and information.

Discussions are a vital part of the learning and assessment process and you will be encouraged to contribute to those and reading exercises.

Assessment Arrangements

Formal examinations are at the end of the second year which comprise of three papers:

Paper 1: The World Of The Hero – 2hrs 20mins (40% of final grade)

Paper 2: Culture & Arts – 1hr 45mins (30% of final grade)

Paper 1: Beliefs & Ideas – 1hr 45mins (30% of final grade)

Where will it take me?

An A Level qualification in Classical Civilisation is a popular and highly regarded qualification by both Higher Education establishments and employers. Classical Civilisation students have gone on to a wide variety of degrees at university. Students of Classical Civilisation gain access to a wide variety of careers including business, law, marketing, media, politics and the retail trades; as well as career pathways specifically involving historical skills, e.g. archaeologist, archivist, curator and teacher.

What will I need?

No previous knowledge of Classical Civilisation, Latin or Greek is necessary, but the skills required are much like those developed in English Literature and History. Students who succeed in Classical Civilisation are interested in taking on new academic challenges, expanding their vocabulary and enjoy reading and extending their knowledge. We would expect students to have passed GCSE English or English Literature at a grade 6 or above. Students also need to be highly motivated and capable of independent research and reading.

Additional Information

Awarding Body

OCR

For more information please contact Huw Williams (PTL for Humanities): huwwilliams@callywith.ac.uk