

CLASSICS ADMISSIONS  
ASSESSMENT

THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR COURSES  
CONTENT SPECIFICATION 2023

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## **Classics Three-Year Course: Latin (or Greek) skills assessment interview**

For candidates with A-level (or equivalent) in Latin

For candidates with A-level (or equivalent) in Ancient Greek but not Latin

*This specimen is designed to give students offering an A-Level or the equivalent in Latin an idea of what to expect for their language skills assessment interview.*

*Candidates will be given a few minutes to look at a passage in Latin, and then asked some questions about the language, grammar and content of the passage.*

*Some vocabulary will be glossed, and we use the OCR AS level Latin vocabulary list (available [here](#)) to help us decide what to gloss, but will not necessarily gloss everything which does not appear there. In particular, very obvious derivative forms (such as adverbs from adjectives) or very obvious compound forms (such as verbs with prepositional prefixes) will not be glossed, in order to encourage intelligent guessing. Continuing with vocabulary acquisition is therefore important: it will also be perfectly possible to ask the interviewer for pieces of vocabulary. The assessment is not a 'vocabulary test', so asking for some help with vocabulary is a perfectly normal part of the process.*

*The assessment may well be combined with interview discussion of other topics, but will be scored separately from any other discussion. A total of twenty marks will be assigned for the exercise: some credit will be given for partial answers, or where the candidate reaches the correct answer with the assistance of the interviewer.*

*Candidates who have taken, or are working towards, an A-level (or equivalent) in Ancient Greek but not Latin will be given a passage in Greek, and asked questions on it, in the same way as described above for Latin. The OCR AS level Greek vocabulary list is available [here](#).*

**Backstory: Pyramus and Thisbe are young lovers separated by their parents' disapproval. In this passage, they concoct a plan to escape and be together, choosing a particular place to meet to avoid confusion.**

<p>postera nocturnos Aurora removerat ignes,  solque pruinosas radii siccaverat herbas:  ad solitum coiere locum. tum murmure parvo  multa prius questi statuunt, ut nocte silenti  fallere custodes foribusque excedere temptent,  cumque domo exierint, urbis quoque tecta relinquunt,  neve sit errandum lato spatiantibus arvo,  convenient ad busta Nini lateantque sub umbra  arboris: arbor ibi niveis uberrima pomis,  ardua morus, erat, gelido contermina fonti.</p>	<p><i>posterus, -a, -um</i> (adj) next  <i>Aurora, -ae</i> (f) Aurora (goddess of the dawn)  <i>pruinosus, -a, -um</i> (adj) frosty  <i>radius, -i</i> (m) ray, beam of light  <i>sicco, -are</i> (1) to dry  <i>coiere = coierunt</i> 'they came together/met'  <i>queror, queri, questus</i> (3 dep) complain  <i>statuo, -ere</i> (3) to decide  <i>fallo, -ere</i> (3) to deceive, to trick  <i>foris, -is</i> (f) door  <i>tectum -i</i> (n) building, house  <i>erro, -are</i> (1) to wander, to err, to make a mistake or miss something  <i>spatior, -ari, spatiatius</i> (1 dep) to take a walk, promenade  <i>bustum, -i</i> (n) tomb  <i>uber, -eris</i> (adj) rich, abundant  <i>pomum, -i</i> (n) fruit  <i>morus, -i</i> (f) mulberry tree  <i>conterminus, -a, -um</i> (adj) next to, near to</p>
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### Questions:

- 1) What does *nocturnos* agree with? [2 marks]
- 2) Translate the phrase *nocturnos* + noun: if you take this metaphorically, what could it mean? [2 marks]
- 3) What tense is *siccaverat*? [2 marks]
- 4) Why might an author use the form *coiere* instead of *coierunt*? [2 marks]
- 5) Translate the phrase *multa prius questi*. [2 marks]
- 6) *statuunt ut...temptent* 'they decide that they should try...': what tense of the subjunctive is *temptent*, and why is a subjunctive used here? [2 marks]
- 7) There are three more subjunctives which are parallel to *temptent* and used in the same way as part of the same construction: pick them out. [2 marks]
- 8) *neve sit errandum lato spatiantibus arvo* 'so that they shouldn't miss each other as they walk xxx': which Latin words HAVE NOT been translated? Can you translate them? [2 marks]
- 9) Where do they agree to meet? [2 marks]
- 10) Which is the most visually impactful image in this passage and why? [2 marks]

## Classics Four-Year Course: Language aptitude assessment interview

For candidates with neither Latin nor Ancient Greek

*This specimen is designed to give Four-Year Course candidates an idea of what to expect during their language aptitude assessment interview, in which an assessor will normally discuss sentences and words such as these with a candidate. There is no written assessment. No knowledge of any language other than English is expected, and candidates will not be assessed on any grammatical terminology.*

- 1a. They lifted Maddy to the roof.
  - 1b. Maddy was lifted to the roof by them.
  - 1c. Lifted by hope, Maddy made her way home.
- How is the word 'lifted' used in these sentences?*

- 2a. Exercising is good for you.
  - 2b. Exercising regularly, Mark got into shape.
  - 2c. By exercising regularly, Mark got into shape.
  - 2d. I found Mark exercising in the gym.
  - 2e. I find exercising in the gym difficult.
- How is the word 'exercising' used in these sentences?*

- 3a. I sing. I sang. I have sung.
  - 3b. I blog. I blogged. I have blogged.
  - 3c. I go. I went. I have gone.
- How and why do the verbs here differ in representing different tenses?*

- 4a. child
  - 4b. woman
  - 4c. foot
  - 4d. car
- Form the plurals of these words. How and why do they differ?*

1 I am	4 we are
2 you are	5 you are
3 she is	6 they are

1 jag är	4 vi är
2 du är	5 ni är
3 hon är	6 de är

1 ásmi	4 smás
2 ási	5 sthá
3 ásti	6 sánti

*Each box means the same thing as the corresponding box across these tables. How are these forms similar, and how are they different?*

## Classics Four-Year Course: Language aptitude assessment interview

For candidates with a qualification in Latin

*This specimen is designed to give Four-Year Course candidates who have a qualification in Latin an idea of what to expect during their assessment, in which an assessor will normally discuss sentences such as these with a candidate. There is no written assessment.*

### The story of Cupid and Psyche (based on Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*)

1. rex et regina urbem magnam bonamque habitabant.
2. tres habebant filias; filia minima multo pulchrior sororibus suis erat.
3. itaque populus omnis eam laudabat, multi veniunt ut eam videant, et sorores invidiosae fiebant.
4. etenim inter se dixerunt: 'sororis nostrae amor omnis homines cepit! ab omnibus amatur! nunc nos isti puellae mortem paremus!'
5. sed non sciebant hae sorores Venerem ipsam, matrem Amoris divinam, etiam invidiosam esse.
6. iam sorores iratae et dea ingens mortem tristem puellae parabant.
7. nemo autem harum scivit Amorem deum ipsum, Veneris filium, puellam illam amare.
8. nam deus puellam vidit et, quamquam homo erat, tamen eam in matrimonium ducere volebat.
9. Amor ipse quidem eam servare voluit, timens matrem suam malum facientem.
10. multa enim pericula puella passa est et paene est mortua.
11. tandem deus fortis celeriter de caelo descendens iussit matrem sororesque ne plus mali ei facerent.
12. clamabat ille voce tristi 'cur, o feminae, puellam tam pulchram necare vultis? nolite eam tangere!'
13. his verbis dictis Amor deinde puellam pulcherrimam, cui nomen Psyche erat, in matrimonium duxit.
14. eis deinde filiola fuit, quam hodie Voluptatem vocamus.

## Classics Four-Year Course: Language aptitude assessment interview

For candidates with a qualification in Ancient Greek

*This specimen is designed to give Four-Year Course candidates who have a qualification in Ancient Greek an idea of what to expect during their assessment, in which an assessor will normally discuss sentences such as these with a candidate. There is no written assessment.*

### The story of Cupid and Psyche (based on Apuleius' Metamorphoses)

1. βασιλεὺς καὶ βασίλεια πάλαι πόλιν μεγάλην καλήν τε οἰκοῦσιν.
2. ἔχουσι μὲν τρεῖς θυγατέρας, ἡ δὲ θυγάτηρ ἡ μικροτάτη πολλῶ καλλίων τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἦν.
3. πᾶς οὖν ὁ δῆμος αὐτὴν ἐπαινεῖ, πολλοὶ ἔρχονται ἵνα αὐτὴν ὀρῶσιν, καὶ αἱ ἀδελφαὶ ἐπίφθονοι ἐγίγνοντο.
4. καὶ γὰρ πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἔλεγον ὅτι “τῆς ἀδελφῆς τῆς ἡμετέρας ἔρωσ πάντας ἀνθρώπους κατέχει! φιλεῖται γὰρ ὑπὸ πάντων! νῦν ἡμεῖς θάνατον αὐτῇ παρασκευάζομεν!”
5. ἀλλ’ οὐ γινώσκουσιν αὐταὶ αἱ ἀδελφαὶ ὅτι ἡ Ἀφροδίτη αὐτή, ἡ τοῦ Ἔρωτος μήτηρ, καὶ ἐπίφθονος ἦν.
6. αἱ οὖν ἀδελφαὶ ὀργιζόμεναι τε καὶ ἡ θεὰ δεινὴ θάνατον δυστυχῆ τῇ κόρῃ παρεσκευάζον.
7. ἀλλ’ οὐδεμία αὐτῶν ἤδη ὅτι ὁ Ἔρωσ, θεὸς αὐτὸς καὶ υἱὸς τῆς Ἀφροδίτης, τὴν κόρην ἐκείνην ἐφίλει.
8. θεὸς γὰρ κόρην εἶδεν, καὶ αὐτὴν ἀνθρώπων οὔσαν, ὅμως ἐπὶ γάμφῳ ἄγειν ἤθελεν.
9. ὁ Ἔρωσ αὐτὸς δὴ αὐτὴν σῶσαι ἐβουλήθη φοβούμενος τὴν μητέρα κακῶς ποιοῦσαν.
10. πολλοὺς γὰρ κινδύνους ἡ κόρη ἔπαθε καὶ ὀλίγου ἔθανεν.
11. διὰ δὲ χρόνου ὁ ἀγαθὸς θεὸς ταχέως κατ’ Ὀλύμπου καταβαίνων ἐκέλευσε τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὰς ἀδελφὰς μὴ πλέον κακῶς αὐτὴν ποιεῖν.
12. ἐκάλεσε δὲ βοῆ οὐ μικρᾶ ὅτι “διὰ τί κόρην οὕτω καλὴν διαφθείρειν βούλεσθε; μὴ αὐτῆς ἄψησθε!”
13. τούτων τῶν λόγων λεχθέντων ὁ Ἔρωσ τὴν κόρην, ἣ τὸ ὄνομα ἦν Ψυχὴ, ἐπὶ γάμφῳ ἤγαγεν.
14. τούτοις μετὰ τοῦτο παιδίον ἐγένετο, ὃ τήμερον Ἡδονὴν καλοῦμεν.



## **Classics: Marking Scheme for the Four-Year Course language aptitude assessment interview**

[9-10] Excellent understanding of the sentences and/or excellent answers to questions at assessment. Able accurately to distinguish different grammatical features or constructions featured in the sentences. Shows a sensitivity to meanings and nuances of words. Grasps meaning of new concepts with rapid intelligence and shows a readiness to apply them to new material.

[7-8] Good understanding of the sentences and/or good answers to questions at assessment. Some mistakes, but not significant enough to prevent a solid understanding of the material.

[5-6] An incomplete understanding of the sentences and material at large. Several mistakes affecting comprehension in crucial places.

[3-4] Limited understanding of the sentences and material at large. Mistakes throughout, serious and numerous enough to prevent accurate comprehension in most places.

[1-2] Little or no understanding of the sentences and material at large.