Programme Specification 2018-19

CLASSICAL TRIPOS

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<tr>
<th>Awarding body</th>
<th>University of Cambridge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching institution</td>
<td>Faculty of Classics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation details</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of final award</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts (Honours)</td>
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<td>Programme title</td>
<td>Classical Tripos</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCAS code</td>
<td>Q800BA/CGL</td>
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<td>HECoS code(s)</td>
<td>100300 (classical studies)</td>
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<td>Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)</td>
<td>Classics and Ancient History</td>
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<td>Qualifications framework level</td>
<td>6 (Honours)</td>
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<td>July 2019</td>
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Classics is currently taught over three or four years in Part IA (1st year, or 2nd year for those taking the four-year option who must first take the Preliminary Examinations for Part IA), Part IB (2nd year, or 3rd year for those taking the four-year option) and II (3rd year, or 4th year for those taking the four-year option).

A typical offer is A*AA. Admission is based on high achievement in A Level or equivalent examinations, school or college recommendations and success in interview. On average there are 75-95 students in each year, all of whom are full-time. A small number of students transfer into Classics, often from a cognate discipline. These may take an extended two-year Part II, as do Affiliated Students.

The core teaching staff consists of 30 University Teaching Officers. In addition College Teaching Officers and Research Fellows teach in supervisions and assist with the programme of lectures; some PhD students also assist with supervisions and Faculty classes.

The Faculty of Classics is situated in a building on the Sidgwick Site on Sidgwick Avenue in Cambridge where there are lecture rooms, offices, the Library (which holds over 60,000 monographs, 331 periodicals, and a pamphlet collection of 6,000 offprints), the Museum of Classical Archaeology (which holds approximately 450 plaster casts of major pieces of Greek and Roman sculpture and subsidiary teaching collections of: 3000 epigraphic squeezes; 10,000 potsherds; 400 Greek and Roman ceramics and smaller replicas), the Mycenaean Epigraphy Collection (a unique resource comprising some 3500 photographs of Linear B documents, with a library of c.1000 books), computing and social facilities.

Educational aims of the programme

The course aims:
(i) to provide an excellent education, both in breadth and in depth, in Classics and its sub-disciplines, informed by current directions in research;
(ii) to provide a stimulating environment in which students may realise their intellectual potential;
(iii) to provide in cooperation with the Colleges an integrated system of learning and teaching which can be tailored to the needs of individual students;
(iv) to help students develop a range of intellectual abilities, skills and qualities of mind that will enable them to make a significant contribution in their chosen careers and walks of life;
(v) to attract high-calibre students.
Part IA and Part IB

Candidates are of standing to take Part IA if they have:
(a) kept one term, provided that six complete terms have not passed after his or her first term of residence; or
(b) obtained honours in another honours Examination, in the year next after or next but one after so obtaining honours, provided that nine complete terms have not passed after their first term of residence or if they have kept one term, provided that six complete terms have not passed after their first term of residence.

By the end of the Part IA they should have:
(i) made the transition in learning style and pace from school (or other educational background) to university;
(ii) developed their understanding of Greek and Latin, with a teaching programme tailored to their previous training in the languages;
(iii) achieved a detailed knowledge of a selection of central Greek and Latin texts, chosen to represent different genres, themes and periods;
(iv) achieved some understanding of the different sub-disciplines that comprise Classics.

Candidates are of standing to take Part IB if they have obtained honours in Part IA or another Honours Examination, in the year next after so obtaining honours, provided that at the time of the examination he or she has kept four terms and that twelve complete terms have not passed after their first term of residence.

On completion of Part IB students should have
(i) acquired the ability to read independently, with appropriate supporting material, a range of Greek and Latin authors in the original language (including, where appropriate, some less commonly read authors), together with an understanding of their literary-historical context and key approaches;
(ii) acquired a working knowledge of the principles of the Greek and Latin languages;
(iii) acquired an understanding, based on the study of primary materials, of two of the following classical sub-disciplines, usually unfamiliar to them from their pre-University training: Greek and Roman history; Greek and Roman philosophy; Greek and Roman art and archaeology; Greek and Latin philology and linguistics;
(iv) acquired sufficient knowledge and understanding of Classics to make an informed choice from the specialised options available in Part II.

Part II

Candidates are of standing to take Part II if they have obtained honours in Part IB or another honours examination in the year before or next before, provided that at the time of the examination they have kept seven terms and that twelve complete terms have not passed after their first term of residence.

On completion of Part II, students should have:
(i) acquired specialist knowledge and advanced understanding of their chosen area (or areas) of Classics;
(ii) had the option of undertaking a substantial piece of written work on a subject of their own devising, which may serve as an introduction to the methods of scholarly research;
(iii) had the option of acquiring knowledge and understanding of an area in a neighbouring discipline (e.g. theology, English).
In addition, some Part II courses provide students with the opportunity to give oral presentations in seminars, important for research, planning, and delivery skills as well as experience in handling questions.

On completion of the whole programme, candidates who have taken the whole Tripos should have:

(i) acquired a competent reading knowledge of Greek and Latin;
(ii) acquired a general knowledge of the principal primary materials on which the study of Classics is founded;
(iii) acquired an awareness of the range and diversity of Classics;
(iv) acquired an understanding of some of the key critical approaches and debates within Classics;
(v) learned to work both autonomously and as constructive participants within small groups;
(vi) learned to handle complex information and the problems presented by it effectively and critically;
(vii) learned to argue clearly both in writing and orally;
(viii) learned to work to time constraints.

Teaching

The strategy for learning and teaching is to combine relatively formal presentation of material in lectures with small group work in classes and College supervisions. Lectures cover a spectrum of learning aims and objectives: providing a framework of information and/or critical approaches; stimulating interest in the subject; opening up perspectives unfamiliar to students from pre-University training; and, especially in Part II, engaging with problems that arise directly out of recent research and newly discovered material, sometimes with the help of invited specialist lecturers from outside the University. Classes complement the lecture programme for certain Part II courses, providing a forum for discussion (sometimes including a student presentation); they may also give students hands-on experience of archaeological and other material.

The Faculty provides a sequence of language classes extending throughout Prelims, Part IA and Part IB, particularly for students entering without A-level in Greek or Latin at entry, who are guided through their target texts. Progress reports are issued to College Directors of Studies. Classes are taught, in graded sets of about 4-10 students, by the Language Teaching Officers, UTOs, CTOs, experienced school teachers and trained PhD students.

College supervision complements lectures in all the sub-disciplines of the subject, and supervisors have access to lecture course bibliographies and other materials produced by lecturers. For students who reached A-level standard before entry, the bulk of language instruction in Part I comes through supervision (although the Faculty has introduced additional language support and reading classes in response to requests from students); other supervision reinforces Faculty provision. Supervisions are interactive sessions in small groups (from 1 to 6 students) usually lasting one hour, based on written work submitted and marked in advance, or on other preparation. They are the principal academic forum in which students develop the ability to work autonomously, learn with and from others, and learn to argue, handle problems, and question their own assumptions — and to cope with deadlines.

A student’s overall workload is monitored by the College Director of Studies. In Prelims and Part IA students are expected to attend most of an integrated lecture programme (up to 14 per week); in addition language classes in Faculty or College occupy between 2 and 5 hours per week; and students typically write one supervision essay per week. This pattern continues into Part IB, although students increasingly select lectures according to their
intellectual interests and choice of options (attending c.10−12 per week). In Part II there is a Faculty norm of 24 lectures and/or classes per option; students generally write one substantial written assignment per week. Part II students may also be involved in preparing presentations for seminars and discussion.

**Assessment**

Formative assessment is provided principally through the supervision system. As well as giving frequent feedback to students, in comments on their written work, supervisors provide termly reports, often including tentative forecasts of examination grades. These are discussed in interviews at the beginning or end of term with the Director of Studies and/or Tutor.

Summative assessment is designed to provide an objective framework for testing students' command of language skills and understanding of their year's work. It operates chiefly by three−hour, closed−book, unseen written examination. For Part IB the examination takes place at the end of the academic year, for Part IA at the beginning of Easter term. The examinations are conducted by independent Boards of Examiners. Parts IA, IB and II are classed (there is no carry-over from one year to the next); the Preliminary Examination is graded only pass/fail (with a mark of distinction, equivalent to a first). All examination papers are subject to blind, anonymous double marking. The criteria for marking and classing are published in the Student Handbook on the Faculty website.

The Part II dissertation (optional and in lieu of one exam paper) offers an alternative form of assessment. This is a particularly common option. Independent marking by two examiners is followed by an oral examination. The oral examination is designed to assess depth of understanding, verify authorship and offer feedback.

Directors of Studies receive a breakdown of their students' performance in examinations, and students also have access to the reports of all three examining bodies made to the Faculty Board. Past examination papers are often used in supervision work, particularly for language teaching.

**Skills**

On completion of the course, students should have acquired the following skills:

i) Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

ii) Intellectual skills: intellectual initiative, critical reflection, the ability to gather, organise and deploy evidence, data and information, the ability to extract key elements from complex information, the ability to identify and solve problems, the ability to select and apply appropriate methodologies, the ability to assess the meaning and significance of information, analytical and evaluative thinking, estimation of the relevance of information, discriminating between opposing theories, forming judgements on the basis of evidence, the ability to engage in lateral thinking, openness to creative thinking, the ability to marshal arguments lucidly, coherently and concisely, the ability to deal with a multi-disciplinary subject.

By the end of the course students should have completed a degree which could be a basis for postgraduate study.

iii) Communication skills: the ability to marshal arguments lucidly, coherently and concisely, the ability to present material orally in a clear and effective way, including sensitivity to the listener’s perspective, the ability to present written material clearly and appropriately, in good English, and with attention to detail.

iv) Organisational skills: self-direction, self-discipline, the ability to write and think under pressure and to meet deadlines, management of time and resources.
v) **Interpersonal skills:** working creatively, flexibly and adaptably with others, formulating and meeting team objectives, interacting successfully on a one-to-one basis.

vi) **Research skills:** bibliographic skills, observational skills, practical skills, writing, note-taking and presentation skills.

vii) **Computer literacy:** use of word-processing, use of spread-sheets and databases, use of the internet and e-mail, use of computer assisted language learning.

**Career Destinations**

Some graduates in Classics go into teaching and/or research, but most, as with many other courses in the arts and humanities, obtain jobs in a wide variety of careers: the civil service, personnel work, the media, law, computing, finance, business and management.

**Quality Management**

(i) The Faculty Board has prime responsibility for managing the undergraduate teaching programme in Classics and monitoring its effectiveness. In exercising this it is advised by standing committees (including the Student-Staff Joint Committee (SSJC), Education Committee, the Caucuses (sub-groups of those who teach literature, philosophy, history, art and archaeology, and philology and linguistics), and College Classical Representatives (CCR), and by ad hoc bodies set up to review the Tripos from time to time as needs arise. The Board follows an annual cycle in reviewing set subjects and prescribed texts and in monitoring delivery of the undergraduate programme, through the regular minutes and reports of its committees and especially student questionnaires and Examiners’ reports.

(ii) Undergraduates are asked to complete yearly questionnaires on their lecture courses. Responses are analysed by the Academic Secretary and the Faculty Administrator. This analysis is then considered by the Education Committee and the Faculty Board, with feedback published to students if appropriate. All lecturers provide questionnaires for their lecture course and the Chairman or Academic Secretary consults these and meets individuals if appropriate further action is deemed necessary.

(iii) Directors of Studies review the supervision programme with their students at beginning- or end-of-term interviews; self-assessment forms give students the opportunity to comment on College teaching (enabling Directors of Studies to give feedback to supervisors and/or modify the programme). The Tutorial system complements this, and enables students to raise any issues that they may not (for whatever reason) wish to raise with their Director of Studies. These systems in practice reveal a good deal about student perceptions of University teaching and the quality of the course, as do undergraduates’ comments to supervisors.

(iv) The Preliminary and Tripos Examiners report to the Board on the conduct of the examinations and issues arising from them. These reports are discussed by appropriate Faculty committees (including SSJC) and adjustments to syllabus, teaching programme and assessment procedures often follow.

(v) External Examiners report directly to the Vice-Chancellor on the conduct of examinations. Their reports (for Parts IB and II) are considered with particular care by the Faculty Board, and the Undergraduate Academic Secretary responds to any issues raised.

(vi) Effectiveness in teaching is given careful consideration by the independent committees or boards chaired by the Vice-Chancellor or a Deputy which make all appointments, reappointments and recommendations for promotion of academic staff. The Faculty
provides everyone involved in teaching with a supportive framework offering varied opportunities – formal and informal – for professional development. The Academic Secretary (UG) has oversight of the dissemination of information on the annual programme of University courses and in-house initiatives: e.g. the annual supervision workshop for graduates hoping to offer College teaching, which is supplemented by the handbook for graduate supervisors produced by current and recent graduate students themselves. In addition, the Faculty provides further training and support for the Graduate Teaching Assistant Bursary holders. Team teaching by staff members involves discussion of objectives and methods, as e.g. for language classes; and lecturers gather feedback directly from their audiences. Staff Development is the principal object of the current appraisal system (biennial for those appointed to the retiring age; annually for others). New members of staff are allocated a mentor for the initial period of their appointment for general advice on professional matters.

**Indicators of Quality**

The Faculty of Classics has emerged from the 2014 Research Assessment Exercise with the strongest research profile of any Classics department in the UK.

In the Faculty of Classics QAA Subject Review in 2001, grades of 4 were awarded in all six aspects of provision.

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, and any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the *Reporter*. The relevant Faculty or Department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: [https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/](https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/)