

Where will it lead?

A rounded education in this foundational subject is widely recognised as immensely useful for a huge variety of degree courses, particularly within Arts and Humanities. The transferable skills developed through studying Classical Civilisation are really valuable for any career path.

What happens in lessons?

Your tutors read the set texts to / with you and discuss the key themes, ideas and issues that arise. Lively debates are common and even some dramatic re-enactments.

Mode of Assessment?

All three units will be examined at the end of the second year:

World of the Hero (40%)

Culture and Arts (30%)

Beliefs and Ideas (30%)

No prior knowledge of Classical Civilisation is required.



Is it hard?

Well, we do consider some of life's most important issues, so yes, I suppose it is, sometimes.



Other information

We run several trips every year, both foreign and domestic. We will go to the British Museum, Classical Civilisation student conferences in London and performances of Greek plays whenever we can. A residential trip to Greece or Rome also takes place on alternate years.

For more information please contact:

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A Level Classical Civilisation



What is Classical Civilisation?

Classical Civilisation is the study of ancient Greece and Rome. The classical world continues to have such an important influence on the modern world, which is perhaps why, though very different to life today, the world of the Greeks and Romans still feels oddly familiar. Myths and legends, which were so culturally important in ancient Greece and Rome, are a central part of the course here at Varndean College.

What we study in Year 1:

» ***World of the Hero:***

The Iliad – considered to be the foundation of the Western literary canon, Homer's epic poem, set during the Trojan War, considers issues of love; anger; vengeance; honour; shame; heroism and suffering. It's a great story too! As Achilles and the other humans count the cost, the immortal gods look down carefree from Mount Olympus.

» ***Culture and the arts:***

Greek Theatre – through reading two tragedies and a slapstick comedy, we discover how the playwrights use myths to address important contemporary issues concerning relationships between men and women; the family and society; the ruler and his people; and human beings and the gods. This unit also involves the study of visual and material culture.



Why do it?

Classical Civilisation is a real gateway subject. One of the best things about our course is the chance it offers to look at different aspects of a whole culture - studying literature, history and politics together to give you a rounded understanding of ancient society as a whole. Classical Civilisation is a useful accompaniment to lots of other A Levels, as well as being very valuable in its own right.

What we study in Year 2:

» ***World of the Hero continued:***

The Aeneid – Virgil's epic poem about one Trojan hero's escape from the burning Troy, his adventures on the way to Italy, and contribution to the founding of Rome. In it, Virgil pays homage to Homer and, in considering what it was to be a hero in the Roman world, perhaps also to Augustus Caesar. We explore notions of duty to the gods / the state / one's family and the importance of fate and destiny.

» ***Beliefs and Ideas:***

We contemplate some of the big issues that were important in the ancient world and still are today. From notions about love to those about politics, we will consider interesting and thought-provoking concepts that will develop your ability to evaluate and analyse ideas as well as sources.

