Classics

The Classics course at Cambridge allows you to study the history, culture, archaeology, art, philosophy and linguistics of classical antiquity, incorporating the study of original texts and artefacts. You can either specialise in a particular field or retain the breadth with which the course starts. You can find out more about the course on the Department website.

Classics at Peterhouse

Peterhouse does not operate a fixed quota of places in Classics, but tends to admit about 3 students each year, and we accept applications for the 3-year and 4-year course. More information about the course can be found on the University website. Peterhouse has three Fellows in Classics: Dr Nicholas Zair (Fellow), Dr Timothy Barnes (Bye-Fellow and Director of Studies in Classics and in Linguistics) and Dr Lea Niccolai (Junior Research Fellow).

Course requirements

Applicants to the 3-year course are expected to be studying Latin and/or Classical Greek to A level or equivalent. Most applicants will be studying Latin A level, though this is not essential. Offer holders without A Level Classical Greek will usually participate in a Greek Summer School before arriving as part of the conditions of their offer, and will also need to come up to Cambridge a few days early in order to attend a pre-term course.

We welcome candidates without A Level (or equivalent) Latin or Classical Greek to apply for the 4-year Classics course – please note it is highly desirable for such candidates to be studying a language at A level (or equivalent) or to have GCSE (or equivalent) Latin or Greek. Applicants to the 4-year Classics course are required to participate in a short Latin Summer School as a condition of their offer.

Other languages, History and/or Classical Civilization are useful preparation for both courses.

The application process

We ask all our Classics applicants to send us examples of recent written work – two pieces for applicants to the 3-year course and three pieces for applicants to the 4-year course. The interview at Peterhouse will take place in two parts – a general discussion of the candidate’s academic work followed by questions about a short piece of Latin literature given to the candidate 30 minutes prior to the interview. This
latter exercise will be designed to assess ability to comprehend and think about a piece of text. No preparation or prior knowledge, except knowledge of the language, will be necessary. This text will not be given to 4-year candidates. A second Classics interview at another College will normally be arranged for applicants to both courses. Whilst in Cambridge for your interviews, candidates will also be asked to sit an assessment for either the 3 or 4 year course. This will be the same across all Colleges and more information can be found on the University website.

**Typical conditional offers**

Our typical conditional offer for Classics, both the 3-year and 4-year courses, is A*AA at A level. IB offers are usually for a minimum of 40-42 points, to include 776 or 777 at Higher level in relevant subjects. Offers are designed to be realistic, taking into account individual circumstances, and to reflect potential and likely levels of achievement. Most of those who receive offers will attain the grades required.