



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION TEACHING BOARD HELD ON 7TH MARCH 2026 BY VIDEO LINK**

**Present:** Gráinne Cassidy (Education Co-ordinator), Henry Cullen (Co-Chair), Dr John Holton (Co-Chair), Dr Charlotte Parkyn (Partnerships Officer), Sana Van Dal (Grants Officer), James Renshaw (Team Lead), Rob Hancock-Jones (Team Lead), Angharad Williams (Eduqas), Alex Orgee (OCR), Dr Aisha Khan-Evans (KCL), Dr Alex Imrie (CAS), Steve Hunt (Cambridge), Helen McVeigh (CANI), Dr Joanne McNamara (Liverpool), Prof Robin Osborne (Omnibus)

**Apologies:** Dr Chris Burnand (Team Lead), Dr Jess Dixon (Team Lead), Prof Susan Deacy (JCT)

### **1. Welcome & Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all members and thanked them for attending the meeting on a Saturday morning.

All apologies were noted.

### **2. Chairs' Update**

No substantive changes or questions were raised regarding the [minutes](#) of the previous meeting. The Chair reviewed actions from the previous meeting. The majority are in progress, except the following:

- Board to share ideas for new CPD courses with GC.
- Board to consider useful approaches to data analysis for the future, which CP can share with the British Academy.

Feedback would be warmly welcomed on these outstanding items.

### **3. CATB Strategy**

#### **Review of the proposed change to a Team Leader role**

- JD will attend CPD events this year to understand key themes and teacher professional development targets, to support the CA in developing CPD that meet teacher needs.
- Following the recent Ancient History CPD day, JD created a [summary document](#) covering topics and strategies discussed.
- Discussion followed as to how to disseminate resources from CPD days more widely. Ideas included one-page summaries (potentially developed using AI tools) sent periodically by email which could include links to further reading, and short intro videos from presenters to provide context for the resources/presentations shared at CPD days (videos could also be shareable on social media).
- Caution was expressed on over-imposing on presenters who already give their time to prepare presentations for CPD days, and potential inconsistencies if some do videos and others don't.



**ACTION:** GC and JD to begin developing one-page summaries for circulation via the Education Bulletin mailing list. GC to explore with CA the feasibility of using interns to support the development of videos/social media content at CPD days.

## **Greek Strategy Development**

The Board discussed the initial ideas HC has developed for a [National Strategy for Classical Greek](#), which is due to be presented at CA Board of Trustees later this month. The document was edited live, with a summary of the conversation as follows:

- The aims are to preserve Greek teaching in secondary schools and broaden access to classical Greek, with focus on coordination rather than necessarily creating new schemes.
- It is important to communicate the value of Greek using language that external stakeholders understand, not just inherent value that classicists might recognise.
- Better to emphasise distinctiveness over 'uniqueness'; highlighting that Greek offers the chance to learn language, literature and civilisation in one; learn a different alphabet and links with Tier 2 and 3 scientific vocabulary.
- Noted that students are drawn by stories and mythology (Percy Jackson effect), but parents need a different conversation about career prospects (e.g. correlation between classical languages and high [GRE/GMAT scores](#)) - different USPs need to be identified for different audiences.
- There is value in celebrating the challenge Greek provides; students can read Homer in the original at GCSE level, which feels more advanced than some of the conversational skills students may develop in other language lessons. However, caution must be given as to the language used around this - as a community we ought not to speak poorly of other subjects.

Discussion also considered which resources would most help current students and promote retention:

- Online practice tools for Greek (vocab trainers, noun/verb ending practice).
- Textbooks with more mythology and culture content.
- Proposed bursary scheme for state school students to make trips to Greece financially viable, or development of a network that could help small departments coordinate trips together for economies of scale.
- Literacy resources for KS2 & 3: Godolphin & Latymer School have successfully introduced a programme in Year 9 covering scientific Greek terms and the origins of the alphabet. Future resources could clearly draw links with other subjects. At primary level, there are 22,000 schools which will be teaching the Ancient Greeks as part of their History curriculum. Resources (ideally online, for greatest flexibility) could introduce some language work, as well as provide a roadmap for students to understand how they could progress towards the CfA Greek Academy/the ICCG.
- Omnibus could incorporate linguistic elements into their articles to spark interest with those studying non-linguistic classics.



- Early achievements ought to be recognised - the success of the ICCG demonstrates student appetite for an intermediate level qualification, and the modern languages community have developed a languages ladder that recognises proficiency in skills at levels lower to the GCSE.

**ACTION:** Revised document will be taken to CA Board of Trustees for further discussion and feedback.

## **5. CATB Qualifications Review**

### **DfE**

Recent meetings with the DfE confirmed classical subjects will not receive Key Stage 3 policy support, but will continue to have support at Key Stage 2, 4, and 5. The DfE is exploring the feasibility of developing a framework for intermediate language qualifications, and has had an initial meeting with the ICCG to ensure ancient languages are represented. Similarly, GC is hoping to co-ordinate a meeting between the DfE, CfA and the national curriculum writer for KS2 languages to ensure support materials for classical languages are well showcased on the new online platform in development.

### **Progress 8 Consultation**

The DfE has opened a consultation on attainment measures, including the expansion of Attainment 8 & Progress 8 following the removal of the Ebacc. The proposed model supports Ancient History and classical languages, but not Classical Civilisation, which may continue to artificially suppress growth in entries. GC has supported Dr Peter Swallow MP in sending a letter to the Education Secretary, and is working with the Council for Subject Associations to collate feedback from across the sector, which will be shared directly with the DfE.

**ACTION:** Board encouraged to [respond to the consultation](#) and to share with colleagues to ensure community representation. The consultation is open until 4 May. Key questions to respond to are 11-15.

### **Updates from Subject Team Leads**

**Ancient History:** due to the implementation timelines for reform, now on a two-track approach to work on both mid- and longer term reform. At GCSE, the team are focussed on developing an Egypt period study, working closely with the Egyptology community. At A Level, consultation is currently focussed on potential updates to the prescribed source lists ahead of the next reform point.



**Classical Civilisation:** Following the developer day in November, the team are now working on the development of optional modules with a source-based rather than fact-based approach, on topics including Ovid's Metamorphoses, the Olympic Games and City Life. The team is meeting shortly to discuss assessment models.

**Classical languages:** Cambridge OCR are working on a proposal to reduce the accidentence and syntax on the GCSE Greek specification, which the languages team have been advising on. First assessment may be 2028, pending Ofqual approval. The proposal goes as far as possible given the recent drop in entries for GCSE Greek from the non-independent sector.

## 6. Exams update

The Chair thanked Eduqas and Cambridge OCR for attending the meeting, and for their continued efforts on behalf of the classics teaching community.

**Eduqas:** Entries are now in line with last year after a jump following preliminary entries; 3,400-3,500 for GCSE Latin, and c. 500 for Level 1 Latin. The new Component 3A texts will be available from Easter. Some teachers have been in contact with timetabling concerns as the Latin papers have been scheduled earlier. AW has requested whether any adjustments could be made for future years. A [consultation](#) is open on the Eduqas website until 20th March.

**Cambridge OCR:** AO has also requested an adjustment for next year's exam timetable, both for Latin and Classical Civilisation, having received correspondence from centres raising concerns. Regarding entries, it is a disappointing set of figures across the board. AO raised some suggestions for this; demographic changes, impact of school funding & VAT, reduced number of entries per centre and/or a reduced number of centres. There has been a drop in entries from the non-independent sector for GCSE Greek. This is worrying if a drop in entries occurs in the independent sector due to increasing financial pressures. Some of the issues around content may be baked into the Subject Criteria, which could be an issue worth raising with the DfE. Cambridge OCR is also exploring what tweaks could be made to the other classical specifications following a meeting between CATB and Myles McGinley.

## 7. Education Co-ordinator's update

The report supplied was noted.

GC provided an update on the Classics APPG, which has successfully held its AGM after navigating complex parliamentary procedures. Planning for the second year is underway, with the intention of covering a broader range of issues beyond the secondary sector, to ensure the APPG represents the whole community. The next meeting is likely to focus on support for the tertiary sector, and a meeting with CUCD will be held shortly to plan for this.



## 8. Partnerships Officer update

CP left the meeting early, but provided a written update:

I have recently attended several meetings at the British Academy examining the broader “health” of the Arts and Humanities sector. Much of the focus has, understandably, been on universities - particularly in light of the national attention currently being given to political debates surrounding higher education. What these conversations have reinforced for me, however, is the importance of articulating clearly the value and benefits of classical subjects, especially in terms that resonate with those who are sceptical about the current state of education and, more specifically, about our own subject areas. CATB, along with the APPG, has already done a tremendous amount to champion this cause within the primary and secondary sectors. However, it may be an area to which we should devote more sustained attention over the coming year, considering the entire educational pipeline.

## 9. PGCE updates

**KCL:** Recruitment going okay. Over the last 3-4 years, the majority of the cohorts have had some level of Greek. This year, a number of trainees are taking the ICCG in June to demonstrate a commitment to teaching Greek to prospective schools.

**Cambridge:** Recruitment continues. There are fewer trainees coming with Greek. Concerns noted about the expectations on early career teachers to teach unfamiliar university-level content while being measured against government standards. SH will soon publish statistics of entry numbers and school locations on his website.

**Liverpool:** JM left the meeting early, but provided a [written update](#).

## 10. Publications updates

A JCT report will be circulated shortly.

## 11. National updates

**CANI:** CANI has recently held a schools conference, with 30 pupils in attendance, but only one school represented. There are small numbers doing Ancient History and Classical Civilisation, and even smaller numbers undertaking Latin and Greek. CANI has organised a lecture programme and is exploring CPD opportunities. HM had a handful of independent students wanting to sit examinations but could not find them a centre to host the exam.



**CAS:** Latin entries remain static with a 10% increase in state pupils. Classical Studies showing a steep upward trend - Higher Classical Studies at highest presentations in over 40 years. Outreach work with Classics for All is focusing more on primary education, and they are pursuing targeted hubs in the central belt. Education Scotland's Improvement Cycle is ongoing - a Level 2 framework is being introduced allowing Latin to be seeded earlier in the secondary phase. AI is seeking funding/venue for broader policy conversation with the government about supporting classics - he has approached Edinburgh University and Royal Society of Edinburgh without success. He is also working with The Open University to get clarity from the General Teaching Council on what qualifications are acceptable for teacher accreditation in classics (80 credits required).

**Close of meeting:** 12:30pm

**Dr John Holton & Henry Cullen, CHAIRS**