Classics (3-year) admissions assessment

In 2022 the assessment (taken by all 3-year candidates who have been shortlisted for interview) will be taken on-line via the University’s assessment Moodle platform. Candidates may take the assessment at their home or school – whichever environment feels the most comfortable to them and has the most reliable internet connection. The assessment will not be invigilated.

The Classics (3-year) Admissions Assessment consists of *either* an unseen passage of Latin for translation into English, *or* an unseen passage of Greek for translation into English.

Candidates should translate the Latin passage, unless they have taken, or are taking, A level Greek or the equivalent *but not Latin*, in which case they should translate the Greek passage.

This will be an 'open-book' test, and candidates are permitted to use either a physical dictionary, or an on-line dictionary, and a grammar. They may not however use other aids. Candidates are welcome to use their own physical dictionary or the on-line dictionary they prefer. Otherwise, we would recommend the following - [https://logeion.uchicago.edu/](https://logeion.uchicago.edu/) - for both Latin and Greek.

The passages set may be either verse or prose. Since the test is an ‘open-book’ one, glosses (i.e. translations of less frequently found words) will not routinely be provided, but guidance on occasional words or phrases may be.

Last year’s papers are pasted below.

Please also consult the marking scheme at the end of this document.

Candidates have **60 minutes** to complete the assessment; an additional 30 minutes is provided to allow them to download the assessment paper and upload their completed response.

Candidates are asked to write their answer **by hand**, and to retain a copy of their response as they may be asked to discuss it in interview.

Full details of the arrangements for the tests will be provided to candidates by the College assessing their application; please contact the relevant admissions office if you have any queries about these.
At-interview assessment: Classics (3-year course)

This is an ‘open book’ test: that means that you are permitted to use a dictionary, either an online one, or a physical copy, and a grammar. But please do not use any other aids.

Answer one question. You should translate the Latin passage (question 1) unless you have taken, or are taking, A-level Greek or the equivalent *but not Latin* in which case you should translate the Greek passage (question 2).

1. Translate into English:

*Persephone*

This poem tells how the earth responds in spring and relates it to the story of Persephone.

tempus adest vernum: renovat Natura colores
   nudasque vestit arbores luxuriante coma.
pulsa est acris hiemps, pulsa est vis frigoris ingens;
   nec impeditur aspera flumen iners glacie.
nidificant volucres; agnus petit ubera matris
   distenta laetus; sedula suave susurrat apis.
Persephonen violas et lilia pulchra legentem
   in foeda saevus abstulit Tartara Dis pavidam,
quae fieret coniunx orbataque lumine sedem
   teneret inlaetabilem cum domino domina.
nusquam spes adera, sed opem *Pater* ipse ferebat:
   “cum matre menses sex ages,” inquit, “et in tenebris
Tartareis totidem”. placuit sors aequa Tonantis;
   maternus excidit dolor, Ditis et ira trucis.

*Pater* = Jupiter

(NB the poem is in the Archilochian metre, as used by the Roman poet Horace. In translating the passage, candidates are not expected to have any knowledge of that metre.)
Imagine a trip to ancient Athens! Think of the art we would see and the poetry we would hear!

φέρε γάρ, ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν ἔκείνην τὴν μεγάλην ὅσον φροντίδος γ’ ἐνεκα μεταβώμεν· καὶ δὴ θώμεν ὅτι τὰς πύλας εἰσερχόμεθα μέγιστον δυναμένης αὐτῆς καὶ ἀκμαζόουσης· καὶ ὄχλος μὲν περὶ στοάν τινα συναγείρεται, τὸ ἱερὸν ἄπαντες μεθ’ ἡδονῆς θεώμενοι, ἀτε τοῦ Φειδίου τάγαλμα καθιδρύοντος· εἰς δ’ ὁδὸν ἔτεραν τρεπόμενοι ῥαψῳδὸν ὀρῶμεν ἐπὶ λέγοντα· κύκλῳ δ’ ὧθοῦνται ἄνδρες καὶ γυναῖκες καὶ παιδία· κατὰ δὲ τῶν παρειῶν δάκρυα καταρρέει αὐτοῖς, ἔστηκε δὲ τὰ ὁμματα καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα κατέχουσι· τὸν γὰρ Πρίαμον λέγει ὡς πρὸς τοὺς πόδας καταπεσὼν τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ τὰς χεῖρας ἐκυσε·

‘δεινὰς, ἀνδροφόνους, αἱ οἱ πολέας κτάνον υἱας’.

φροντίς, -ίδος, ἢ: suggested translation: ‘imagination’

μεταβώμεν < μεταβαίνω
At-interview assessment: Classics (3-year course)

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Answer one question. You should translate the Latin passage (question 1) unless you have taken, or are taking, A-level Greek or the equivalent *but not Latin* in which case you should translate the Greek passage (question 2).

1. Translate into English:

_The clock speaks_

* A clock addresses a boy and tells him a few things about himself and about the effects which the passage of time will have on him.

_ae te puer, viridis quaerens certamina campi,
   suspice me; tristi seria voce loquor._

_ridebis merito: nam sum sine corpore voltus,
   et mihi sunt, nasum qua decet esse, manus._

_sed simul ac sonui, tota trepidatur in urbe;
   incipient lenti tum properare pedes._

_sta, puer; admonitus audi; maturior ibis
   circum doctores; oderis ipse moras._

_acrior e lecto surges, aderisque vocato
   nomine, nec mensam serus adire voles._

_sic tibi – quid rides? – furtim sapientia crescit;
   sic omni semper tempore promptus eris._

_hos doctus numeros, haec doctus tempora, disces
   nonullo numeris tempore deesse tuis._
2. Translate into English:

Some enthusiastic students ask an enthusiastic teacher to help them improve their Attic Greek and learn how to make poetry.

[μαθηταί] ὦ χαίρε.

[διδάσκαλος] καὶ ὑμεῖς χαίρετ', ὦ νεανίας ὑμᾶς ἄττα διαλεγόμεθα Ἀττικῶς·

βούλεσθε ἀρα ἅδηστα ἔγωγε', ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἂν δυνάμεθα.

[μαθηταί] ἥδιστα ἔγωγ', ἀλλ' οὐ γὰρ ἂν δυνάμεθα.

[διδάσκαλος] οὐ δὲί φοβεῖσθαι· ῥάδιον πειρωμένῳ συνετοῖσι φωνεῖν συνετά, καὶ

ἐὰν τις ἂν ξένος.

[μαθηταί] ἀλλ' ἂρα σὺ καὶ διδάξαι ἡμᾶς δύνασαι ἐμμέτρως λαλεῖν;

[διδάσκαλος] ἔγωγε' φησὶ γὰρ τις τῶν σοφῶν ὅτι ἄπλως ἴαμβος ἐσθ' ὁ τῶν πολλῶν

λόγος καὶ φθέγγεται τις ἄγνοων ἴαμβικά. ἀλλὰ πρῶτον γε πειρώμεθα μέτρον ἄφέντες ψιλῶν

λόγῳ χρῆσθαι. ἐγὼ μὲν ἑρωτήσω, σὺ δέ ἀποκρίνου καὶ ὡς λαλήσεις Ἑλληνιστὶ.
Marking Scheme for the Three-Year Course Admissions Assessment (2022)


[7-8] Good understanding of the passage. Some mistakes in accidence/syntax, but not significant enough to prevent basic comprehension. Some improvements on a literal translation and good overall fluency of English.

[5-6] Incomplete understanding of the passage. Several mistakes in accidence/syntax with some affecting comprehension in crucial places. Translation mostly literal and lacking fluency of English.

[3-4] Limited understanding of the passage. Mistakes in accidence/syntax throughout, serious and numerous enough to prevent accurate comprehension in most places.

[1-2] Little or no understanding of the passage. Only shows isolated knowledge of accidence/syntax.