Junior Cycle Classics – Strand 3: Classical Language (Latin)
Supporting approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

Introduction:

Through studying this strand (strand 3: classical language), students are acquainted with the literature, thought and history of a civilisation at the roots of western culture. They learn to read, analyse, and appreciate Latin texts, focusing on both the literary sphere of myth and the historical reality of daily life. They investigate many kinds of texts, from stories, poems and staged dialogues to inscriptions, speeches, and historical accounts. By translating, interpreting, and creating these diverse texts, students engage in activities that help them appreciate Latin as a language which was spoken, heard, and written by real people to communicate with each other.

Comparison, systematic analysis, logical deduction, and etymological association are intrinsic parts of this strand. In addition to offering students the opportunity to enjoy the language of the Romans, this strand also builds their confidence in their native and other languages, as well as strengthening analytical skills valuable to other subjects.

The teaching and learning approaches suggested below offer a support to help realise the ambition expressed above. The separation of the language into four areas below does not imply that language learning is seen as isolated areas of study; the students' engagement and learning will only be optimised by a fully integrated experience both across and within strands.

It should be noted that this document is not a prescriptive list of what aspects of Latin should be included in teaching and learning, nor is it an exhaustive list. It should be seen as an aid to teachers in seeing possibilities allowed by the learning outcomes in strand 3, and how these may be integrated with learning outcomes in strand 1 as well, thus allowing for the integration of language with students' full experience of the Classics specification.

A. Exploration of Latin texts

As students explore and discuss Latin texts with their classmates and teacher in a classroom setting, they will be exposed to a variety of language categories and concepts. The following list indicates, *exempli gratia*, some language phenomena which students are likely to encounter in texts, with which they may engage in different ways in a classroom setting: the teacher may simply gloss, identify or explain what is unfamiliar, or students may be challenged to resolve unfamiliar words, expressions, forms or constructions from previous learning and contextual information; to interpret the general sense, identify specific information, or use language resources such as dictionaries, grammars, commentaries or existing translations to come to a satisfactory understanding and appreciation, and explain the steps that led them to this result. Such activities, which can be included in the Language Portfolio, might examine, for example:

- Further noun categories (for example, *dies* and *manus*)
- Irregularly formed or declined nouns, adjectives, comparatives, superlatives, and adverbs (for example, *melior* and *optimus* with *bonus*)
- Further pronominal forms (such as the demonstratives *hic, haec, hoc* and *ille, -a, -ud*)
- Further tenses and moods (such as pluperfect forms, subjunctive forms, perfect and future active infinitives)

1

- Further common irregular verbs and their principal parts (for example, *fero, nolo, volo*)
- The category and forms of the passive voice and the notion of deponent verbs
- Present active and perfect passive participles, used as attribute and predicate
- Constructions such as the ablative absolute and accusative + infinitive
- The meaning and cases of common prepositions (for example, *ad, ante, circum, contra, in, inter, per, post, prope, trans* with accusative; *ab, cum, de, ex, in, pro, sine, sub* with ablative)
- Further uses of the cases (for example, the accusative of respect)
- Different kinds of questions (with *nonne, -ne, num*) and commands (such as prohibitions with *noli[te]* or *ne* + subjunctive)
- Various types of main and subordinate clauses with indicative and subjunctive forms (for example, temporal *cum* + pluperfect active subjunctive; conditionals; purpose clauses with *ut*)

B. Comprehension and translation

The following grammatical parameters are suggested for the teaching and assessment of students' ability to independently create accurate translations of sentences and passages of limited complexity; to recognise, describe and use language patterns such as word types, inflection, grammatical functions and word order ; and to explore grammatical rules by writing, completing and transforming words, phrases and simple sentences:

- Regular nouns of first, second and third declensions (*puella*; *dominus, verbum*; *rex*, *clamor*, *navis*, *nomen*, *opus*)
- Regular adjectives of three endings (*laetus, -a, -um*) and two endings (*fortis, -e*; *ingens*; *celer, -e*), used as attribute and predicate, with their adverbial forms (*laete*, *fortiter*, *facile*; also *bene, male*) and comparatives (*laetior, -ius*, construed w. *quam*) and superlatives (*laetissimus, -a, -um*)
- Numbers 1–10, 100, 1000 with the inflection of *unus* (and *nullus*), *duo, tres*
- Personal pronouns *ego, nos, tu, vos*; demonstrative *is, ea, id*; relative *qui, quae, quod* (nominative and accusative only); interrogative *quis, quid* (nominative and accusative only); possessive *meus, tuus, noster, vester, suus*; reflexive *se*
- Present, future, imperfect and perfect active indicative of all five conjugations
- Present active imperative and present active infinitive of all five conjugations
- Present, future, imperfect and perfect active indicative of *sum*, *possum* and *eo*
- Standard uses of the cases: nominative as subject and predicate; accusative as object; genitive of possession; dative as indirect object; ablative of means/instrument, manner, time; vocative for direct address
- Direct statements, questions, and commands
- Temporal, relative, and conditional subordinate clauses with active indicative forms and indirect statements with present active infinitive

C. Vocabulary

- Like the Junior Cycle specification for Modern Foreign Languages, the Classics specification has indicative areas for vocabulary building. These areas are the themes of Strand 1, myth and daily life, which provide a stock of frequently-used and familiar words and phrases and familiar topics.
- In exploring and discussing Latin texts with their classmates and teacher, students will learn additional words to expand their vocabulary.
- To expand and consolidate their vocabulary, students can be encouraged to keep a record of words learned in their Language Portfolio, to relate new words they encounter to cognate words they already know in Latin or in modern foreign languages and English – for example, *aqua*/aquarium, *porto*/portable, *luna*/lunar, *octo*/octet. Engagement with mottoes, common expressions and abbreviations, proverbs and famous sayings may also enrich and consolidate students' vocabulary – for example, *summa cum laude; per annum; A.D.; a.m., e.g.; etc.; i.e.; N.B.; S.P.Q.R.; e pluribus unum; tempus fugit; carpe diem; quod licet Iovi non licet bovi; veni, vidi, vici*; numbers written with Roman numerals I, X, C, D, M.

D. Composition and conversation

- The expectation that students explore vocabulary and grammatical rules by writing, completing, and transforming phrases and simple sentences invites composition exercises in a classroom setting which may contribute to students' Language Portfolio. Such exercises might focus on forms of regular nouns and adjectives of the first, second and third declensions; present, imperfect and perfect active indicative forms and present active imperative forms of regular verbs; present and imperfect indicative forms of *sum* and *possum*; standard uses of the cases, direct statements, questions and commands.
- The oral and aural skills envisaged of accurately pronouncing words, phrases and simple sentences and recognising frequently-used words and phrases in listening invite reading aloud of sentences and texts and, for example, short conversations using common interactional utterances such as *Quid est nomen tibi? Salve! Salvete! Gratias tibi ago; Sol lucet; Licetne mihi ire ad latrinam? Quis est? Quid est? Vale! Valete! Ita vero; Certe, Sic, Minime, Gratias ago*, etc.
- Any active language use in written tasks would reasonably have to be much less ambitious. Suitable assignments in this context might be, for example, putting nouns or verbs in the correct form in a sentence, or creating a phrase or clause using provided vocabulary.