

*Latin
at Future Academies*

A history of Latin in schools



1945: Independent and grammar schools taught Latin

1988: Latin was not part of the National Curriculum

2005: 100 non-selective state schools offered Latin

2015: 600 non-selective state schools offer Latin

2018: Numbers increasing due to autonomy over curriculum in academies

Vocabulary: 60% of English words come from Latin e.g. 'contrast', 'contradict' and 'contrary' (which all come from 'contra'); 'optimistic', 'optimum' and 'optimal' (which all come from 'optimus'), so a familiarity with Latin really helps to bolster children's English vocabulary.



Literacy: Latin improves students' general literacy skills. Latin students, for example, outperform other students, including MFL students, on the verbal portion of the SAT.



Cultural literacy: Many Latin abbreviations are still in use in English today - e.g.; etc.; N.B.; i.e.; p.s.; a.m.; p.m.; vs. - as are many Latin expressions - vice versa; status quo; per annum; pro rata.

Furthermore, a knowledge of Roman mythology and Latin poetry is essential in order to fully understand the nuances and puns contained within many newspaper articles and books.

Breadth: Informs study of many, many other subjects.

Skills: rigour, precision, resilience.

Difficulty: Of 34 GCSE subjects, Latin is the hardest in which to get an A.*



Perceived elitism: Latin is still regarded as an elite subject, and is associated with private schools, Oxbridge colleges and the law. Teaching the subject sends a clear message that the students are as capable of academic success and as deserving of an elite education as those educated in the independent sector. Furthermore, a familiarity with Latin makes the rituals and language associated with Oxbridge and the law less alien, and makes entry into these environments a less intimidating experience than it might otherwise be.

University admissions: University admissions examiners regard Latin very highly, both because of research evidence that demonstrates the difficulty of this qualification and because of personal prejudices. The importance of the latter cannot be underestimated: whether rightly or wrongly, admissions examiners do not regard all subjects as equal, and although universities do not admit it, there is often a spoken or unspoken consensus about which subjects are worthwhile.

Many students love Latin: Many students of Latin derive genuine enjoyment from the subject and a sense of satisfaction from having risen to the difficult challenge that Latin poses.