



Dear Fresher

Can we start by saying that we look forward to being able to welcome you to Queen's in October to begin your degree in Classics and English (IB)? This letter sets out some introductory information on the Classics element of your course; our colleague Dr Rebecca Beasley will write to you separately about English.

For 'Prelims', your first examination which takes place in the third term, you will study the *Aeneid* as well as further Latin literary texts. Language work carries on in parallel to these topics for the whole period, with specialised University and College classes in Latin beginning in your first term.

Before you come up, we would like you to have done the following. You should have read the *Aeneid* in translation, and book I in Latin. For background, it would be a good idea also to read Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in translation. There are many translations available; those published by Penguin or Oxford (Oxford World's Classics) are recommended.

We will give you advice on which books and editions are prescribed for the exam when you come up, but for Vergil the Oxford Classical Texts series is used for examinations (as it is wherever possible). You should also *always* read texts with a good commentary. For the *Aeneid*, the recommended student commentary is by R.D. Williams (*Virgil: Aeneid I-VI* and *VII-XII*, two volumes, Duckworth/Bristol Classical Press). You will need for your language work a good dictionary: *The Oxford Latin Dictionary* (or Lewis & Short's *Latin Dictionary*) are great resources, but you will find the smaller versions more convenient for reading texts. You also need grammars: the *Oxford Latin Grammar*, by James Morwood is a good basic grammar: if you want something more detailed, go for B.L. Gildersleeve & G. Lodge, *Latin Grammar* (Macmillan).

There follow some suggestions for books to read before next October. You need not read all of them nor indeed every page of those you do look at: the ability to 'gut' a book will be a useful skill to acquire. For classical culture and history in general:

R. Lane Fox: *The Classical World: an epic history* (Penguin)

S. Price & P. Thonemann: *The Birth of Classical Europe: A History from Troy to Augustine* (Penguin 2011)

M. Goodman, M. Beard and M. Crawford: *The Roman World 44 BC – AD 180* (Routledge), *Rome in the Late Republic*, (Duckworth)

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the syllabus or would like to talk to any of the Tutors at Queen's, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us and we will try to give you any help we can.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Christopher Metcalf and Dr Charles Crowther