The Australian Society for Classical Studies

Greek and Latin Language Competition 2026

Prizes awarded for the entries that show the best all-round language skills and highest communicative competency in Greek and Latin

ASCS is an inclusive organisation. It encourages entries from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Māori, and Pasifika students, students who are living with disabilities, students of diverse gender and sexuality, mature-age students, and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Aims of the competition

- To reward our top students in Greek and Latin
- To promote Classics through the institution of international competitions
- To recognise excellence in language teaching in Australian and New Zealand universities

The competition is open to all students enrolled in their second year of ancient language classes in Australian and New Zealand universities. We would like to encourage as many students as possible to take part, and we hope that teachers will encourage all their students to participate.

Rules and Administration of the Competition

1. ASCS will award a prize of AUD $250 to the best entry in each language
2. **Eligibility**: all students in Australian and New Zealand universities studying Ancient Greek or Latin enrolled in their second year of ancient language classes may enter.
    a. If a student studied the language prior to tertiary studies (e.g., at high school) and, for this reason, is placed directly into the second year of the programme at tertiary level, this student counts as a second-year student for the purpose of this competition.
    b. Students in their third year (or more) of tertiary language study or in an fourth-year (or more) Honours program are not eligible to enter.
    c. A student may only enter the competition once per language.
    d. Should a competitor have studied the language at two different institutions, they will be listed as a student of both institutions in prize announcements and ASCS records.
3. The competition is run by a coordinator, approved by the ASCS council. The coordinator sets the passages for analysis or nominates a suitable person or persons to do so for each section of the competition.

4. **Entry (university):** The competition coordinator circulates the passages for analysis along with a coversheet (and the competition rules) to university departments through the ASCS university representatives. The representatives then liaise with staff at their institution concerning suitable candidates. University representatives or suitable teaching staff at that institution then distribute the competition papers to students on a specific date, set out in the e-mail to university representatives.
5. **Entry (student)**: Upon receiving the competition papers, students may work on their response during the allotted time period. Upon completing their work, they must complete the coversheet, and sign and date it affirming that the work is entirely their own. The name of the student should not appear on the actual answer sheet. The student should then send their coversheet and answer sheet as separate PDFs to the competition coordinator at the e-mail addresses provided on the coversheet.
    a. The work submitted must be entirely the student's own. Students may use reasonable resources (e.g., a dictionary) to help them complete the assignment, but may not undertake further research (e.g., scholarly commentaries). They should instead use their own judgment and experience to respond to the text and translation.
    b. Students may not seek help from academics with the exercise, and academics may not look at or otherwise review draft entries prior to submission.
    c. Students may not use as generative AI or other digital aids to produce answers. The online version of a reference work (e.g., a lexicon) may be consulted.
6. **The task:** There are separate papers and prizes for Latin and Greek. The papers take the form of an assignment that requires a) analysis of language and b) evaluation of and commentary on a published translation. There are three short passages per assignment, representing a mixture of verse and prose and 'canonical' and 'non-canonical' texts to expose students to a wide range of styles and genres.
    a. For two of the three passages, students are asked to answer a series of language questions, such as analysis the form, meaning, and function of a particular expression. This direct analysis is designed to measure competitor's fine control and understanding of the morphology, grammar, and syntax of the texts. Here, judges are looking for knowledge of what the particular word is doing in its context—why might a particular adjective be in the accusative singular, or why is a particular verb in the subjunctive?
    b. For the third passage, students will be given a passage in Greek or Latin along with an English translation, and will be asked to judge

whether or not it is an effective translation. The question is designed to encourage students to engage with the more complex ways in which the translation might or might not capture the essence of the original, beyond its literal accuracy relative to the original. Students might tackle this task in a number of ways, such as exploring the extent to which the translation captures the literary style or tone of the original, the extent to which it reflects the historical subtleties of the original, or how it features words that are effective equivalents in our own society for the word choices in the original. To be clear, these are only suggestions—the student should select the response they find most salient. Additional guidance may be available on the paper itself. **A strict word limit of 1,000 words applies to this section.**

c. Where possible, entries should be typed. If it is necessary to write by hand, this should be done with special attention to legibility. Examiners will not give marks to work they cannot read.

7. **Judging:** Judging of the papers will be done by two judges for each language, working independently. They will be provided with a rubric, and the anonymised entries. After separately scoring the entries, the judges will then confer to decide the results. Where possible, the rubric may be provided to students after judging is completed.
   The weighting of each section is:

a.	Part 1: Language analysis	Latin: 37.5%	Greek: 50%
b.	Part 2: Translation exercise	Latin: 62.5%	Greek: 50%

Dates for the Competition (2026)

The 2026 competition will run for seven days.

- Papers will be provided to students on Monday, 9 November at noon (AEDT)[1]
- **Completed entries (with signed coversheets) must reach the competition coordinator no later than noon (12:00 PM) AEDT on Monday, 16th November, 2026**. No entries will be accepted after this date or time.

The competition coordinator for 2026 is Andrew Connor (Monash University). For questions concerning the rules or other aspects of the competition, e-mail ascslanguage@gmail.com.

[1] That is: 2:00 PM NZDT, 11:30 AM ACDT, 11:00 AM AEST, 10:30 ACST, 9:00 AM AWST, or 6:00 AM MAWT.