Bulletin of the COUNCIL of UNIVERSITY CLASSICAL DEPARTMENTS

Bulletin 29 (2000)

Contents

Sorcerer's apprentice

I was wondering whether I could possibly describe myself as a new broom, and that reminded me of the hapless early career of the sorcerer's apprentice, which seemed a more appropriate allusion. The first time one does any job, it is apt to be a bit chaotic. So this is the moment to thank the outgoing sorcerer, Nick Lowe, for his five years as Editor. Colleagues who have seen more of it than I have will appreciate his tremendous efficiency, creativity and good humour. His spirit overshadows this edition too: I am immensely grateful for the advice, encouragement and wit which came sailing over the ether in response to my confused and technophobic cries for help. Nick has become Webmaster; our website has grown so much and is set to grow so much more, that it is now a job in its own right.

Many thanks are also due to the contributors of this year's articles. Here, however, there is also some bad news. The Bulletin depends on its contributors. This year the Committee asked for an article on all the British Schools around the Mediterranean, on the grounds that Athens and Rome are the only two which are very widely known and used, and it would be a good thing to publicise the others. I set about gathering information. Athens and Rome, and individually Robin Osborne and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, responded at once, with large quantities of splendidly-produced publicity. Gina Coulthard recommended the Ankara website to me. Other answers came there none. Letters and phone calls went unacknowledged. When it came to writing the article, all I had was a lot of information from Athens and Rome which departments get anyway, and which it did not seem particularly useful to reproduce on its own.

So this is an apology, a regret and a new year's resolution. I will try to produce the article on British Schools for the next Bulletin. But I need help - information - anecdotes - memories of what it's like to *be there*, from *all* the schools. Please write in.... To fill the gap this year, I have put in a short version of a piece the *Journal of Educational Assessment* on assessment in Roman education, in the hope of raising at least a wry smile from all those who have recently entertained or are about to entertain the QAA. Not from a morbid love of self-publicity; *au contraire*. Every editor's greatest ambition is to have nothing to do.

Finally, in his article, Geoffrey Eatough points out that concentrating on quality assessment and research assessment is in danger of distracting us from more fundamental questions of the nature and future of our discipline. What the profession will need most in the next few years, he says, is visionaries. So this is also an appeal to (or for) visionaries. I know that the wisdom of the scribe is supposed to come by opportunity of leisure, but anything that hard-pressed colleagues can contribute in this forum to contemporary debate and wisdom literature, will be greatly appreciated.

CHAIR'S REPORT: 1999-2000

R. W. SHARPLES

With the Year of Subject Review for Classics impending, it is not inappropriate that much of the Council's activity in the past year has been concerned with the way in which individuals' progression through the various stages of studying our subject both reflects and shapes the

nature of the subject as a whole, both in terms of what is studied at each stage - and indeed of just how 'stages' are to be distinguished in an inherently flexible subject - and in terms of the support available, especially to postgraduates and to researchers. Even if the stimulus for considering these issues has in part come from consultations by other bodies, they are matters we need to bear constantly in mind, for the future of the subject depends on them.

Much activity this year has indeed been devoted to formulating responses to consultations by collecting opinions from member departments; we welcome these opportunities to make our views known. Our response to the QAA consultation on Qualifications Frameworks was submitted on the 16th of December; it noted that the QAA had modified its position with regard to MA and BA language teaching, but had not modified its opposition to the issue of the award of the M.Phil. on the basis of a lower standard of achievement in the examination for a Ph.D, rather than on the basis of a quite separate examination. Our response also included comments from Glasgow concerning the proposed definitions of Honours and Pass degrees, which seemed to imply an unrealistic amount of separate teaching for the two types of degree. In March we commented on the Classics Benchmarking statement, noting anxieties that Classical Archaeology might fall between the two stools of Classics on the one hand and Archaeology on the other, and that stress on the need to make beginning language courses available to students at all stage of their degrees might undermine programmes in institutions with relatively little language provision. As ever, it was a matter of steering between Scylla and Charybdis.

Our response in January to the British Academy consultation on research support expressed the view that Academy grants to individuals should not include money for replacement teaching, for the reason, suggested indeed by the Academy itself, that the sums available would not be sufficient, and also because this could reinforce the trend towards poor payment of part-time teachers. We also rejected generally the suggestion that the upper limit of £5,000 for Academy grants should be increased, though we felt that a few grants of up to £7,000 might be made available for scholars at an early stage in their careers. If there was a proposal for increased Academy funding for archaeology, on the grounds that the AHRB was focusing its own grants on fewer and larger excavations, such Academy funding should be ring-fenced, so as not to erode that available for other areas. In responding in April to the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council document 'Research and the Knowledge Age' we drew heavily on a very full set of comments from St. Andrews, in particular emphasising the UK-wide and indeed international aspects of our subject.

In responding in October to the British Academy review of Graduate Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences we emphasised three issues. One was the difficulty experienced by British postgraduates in obtaining funding; the resulting international composition of the student body at postgraduate level was a strength in itself - and showed how highly UK Classics is regarded in other countries - but raises anxieties for the future of the subject in this country. A second anxiety concerned the effect of pressure to complete a PhD within four years (including the writing-up period); not only is there a tension between this and the increasing need for even full-time postgraduates to support themselves by working, but it was also felt that it may be making British students in particular, with less breadth and depth of previous linguistic training than formerly, less willing to specialise in areas such as papyrology, epigraphy and the close study of texts. While we have emphasised that the PhD is not and should not be seen purely as training for future academic staff, none the less this change in emphasis in the areas studied has implications for the future supply of staff in our subject; and this was reinforced by the third point, the relative unattractiveness of

an academic career when low relative levels of pay are combined with the loss of most of the traditional compensations for it.

Language acquisition was also a major issue at the Council session at the CA conference at Bristol in April, which was concerned with the PGCE in classical subjects. There were two panellists, Emma Clarke, at the time a Classics PGCE student at Cambridge, and Martin Forrest, who teaches for the PGCE in History PGCE at the University of the West of England. It emerged that in practice PGCE students currently need Latin A level as a qualification in order to gain employment, regardless of the Latin they may have done in their degree course. It was suggested that Classical departments should consider some form of external validation of the language aspects of their degrees, much in the way in which many degrees in fields other than the Humanities are approved by professional bodies. Another possibility would be the compiling of a register of the various ways in which Latin and Greek may be learned - *ab initio* in degree courses, though further education classes, at summer schools, etc. - with a view to making explicit just what level of proficiency each type of course leads to. As far as university departments are concerned, greater clarity about the level of understanding of the language that courses presuppose, and aim to reach, is part of the ethos of Subject review/Academic Review anyway, and the creation of such a register would as have the advantage, as a by-product, of providing a comprehensive listing of language-learning opportunities. The point was also made at the conference that in considering their language provision Classical departments need to bear in mind the interests of different groups of students, e.g. prospective teachers and also prospective researchers. Attendance at the Council session was limited (18 people in all), because of the competition from concurrent panels; this year's topic was particularly suited to the CA conference, which is attended by a considerable number of undergraduate and postgraduate students who may be potential teachers, but the Standing Committee feels that the need for a regular CUCD session on a specific topic every year has been lessened by the ease of electronic publicity and communication, and by the frequency of consultations on major issues. It therefore intends to propose to the Council that there should be no specific CUCD session at the CA conference in 2001.

The concerns about exclusivity raised by the Laura Spence case in the summer prompted the Standing Committee to ask what proportion of students taking classical subjects in universities have come from state schools, and we intend to seek information about this from UCAS. We understand that the funds for Gifted and Talented pupils in the Government's Excellence in Cities initiative could be applied for to support the attendance of pupils at summer schools, and intend to pursue this with JACT. Publicity for the subject generally, especially through the Web, is a concern; clearly close collaboration with the CA and with JACT is desirable here to avoid duplication. Attendance by students at the Postgraduate Fair which has been held in London in recent years has been disappointing, and the Standing Committee felt that the Web was probably a better medium both for publicising postgraduate study in classics in general to undergraduate students, and also for indicating the particular programmes that are available in various institutions.

Two other developments in the use of the CUCD Website have been the posting of a list of external examiners, to help departments avoid asking those who would be unable to help them because they are already heavily committed, and the posting of reports of Standing Committee meetings. The latter is part of a new strategy for communication with member departments, considered by the Standing Committee and to be put to Council at the November 2000 meeting. Because of the difficulty of keeping track of who in a department is

the CUCD representative, it is proposed that formal communications will be sent to Heads of Department or their equivalents, but at the same time a message will be sent to the Classicists mailing list (classicists@listserv.liv.ac.uk) alerting all staff to its general contents. Where a response is required, that should again come from the contact, i.e. the Head of Department, both because responses from individuals might be unmanageable in number, and also because the Council is a Council of Classical Departments, rather than of Classicists. The arrangements for discussion of such communications and responses within departments are naturally a matter for local decision, but we hope that as many people as possible would be involved. As for representatives at actual Council meetings, it will as now be for departments to choose who should attend on their behalf; sometimes this may depend largely on availability. The Standing Committee is also proposing (and has indeed put it into effect provisionally for this year) that nominations for election to the Standing Committee at the November Council should be sent by Departments to the Secretary by the end of September.

The Chair has become a member of the advisory committees for the Learning and Teaching Support Network sub-centre in Classics, a major development about which Lorna Hardwick writes elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin, and also for the new HUMBUL Web gateway at Oxford. Other activities of the Chair have included seeking clarification from the AHRB on its provision of travel funds for postgraduate award holders; communicating to the AHRB the Council's nominations for members of its research award panels; making representations to one institution in support of its classical programme; expressing support for colleagues in French secondary schools concerning a proposed reduction of the role of Greek and Latin there (though in fact consultation about our response was overtaken by events, i.e. the resignation of the Minister who had made the proposal); and communicating queries and responses between departments and the Chair of RAE panel 57.

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October, 2000

CLASSICS AT BRITISH UNIVERSITIES, 1998-99: STATISTICS

Geoffrey Eatough

Despite appearances there is little change from last year in the number of honours students in Classics departments, the first column in Table A. The actual number of people being counted as honours students has declined, back towards the 1995 figure of 5606, but the FTE (Fulltime Equivalent Student) figure, the figure in brackets, on which departmental finances should be based is only 2.7% lower. Since one department has found it impossible to locate their Ancient History students this year one can indeed say there is little change. For the category 'All students in Classics departments' which includes the large category 'Other' the number of students has increased though the FTE value has dropped from 6252.1 to 6118.6. This is a drop of 2.1%, but most certainly not even that, since under the new modular systems some departments are finding it difficult to keep track of students doing modules in their department. One major department was eventually given a dispensation from providing figures in that category; the plaintive demonstrating that the study of the classical arts of

persuasion and supplication still has a practical value. The introduction of the Open University (OU) figures I explained in the last bulletin. The OU figures are very much the same as those of last year and do not upset the stability of this year's global figures. The staff/student ratio is also much the same, though this figure has become a little unreal with the universal use of teaching assistants. It is however some kind of indicator.

In Table B the honours students are divided into the major categories of Classics, Greek and Latin (CGL) and Classical Studies, Ancient History and Archaeology (CSAHA) both Single Honours (SH) and Joint Honours (JH). A decade ago it would have been easier than now to think of CGL as the linguistic courses, and CSAHA as the non-linguistic courses. One can however, depending on one's locality, take Classics degrees which have large elements of non-linguistic material, or Classical Studies degrees which are predominantly linguistic. The categories are far from watertight. Let us suppose that the use of these categories represent the individual department's perception of its mission rather than the uncertainties of the member of staff delegated with the task of compiling the statistics. CGL(SH) on a head count remains remarkably close to last year's figure though the FTE figure has risen and there are significant rises in both head count and FTE in JH. A matter of concern might be CSAHA (SH) where there is a drop of 9.3% on head count and 6.1% on FTE. The JH figure for students taking CSAHA subjects is almost the same but again the FTE figure is lower, by 6.2%.

Table C enables us to analyse these figures. There is a significant drop in AH(JH) both in number of students 16.9% and FTE 23.5%, but a rise in CS(JH) of 18.1% and 16.8% respectively. There is a drop in AH(SH), 13.3% and 6.1%; the bigger drop however is in CS(SH), 15.3% and 11.4%. My guess is that in most universities CS has a larger linguistic element than AH. The drop in CS (SH) may be directly compensated by the large increases in G (SH) and L (SH) and C (JH) and G (JH), but also by CS (OTHER) 11.5% and 22.9% which again may be evidence of the difficulties of categorising, or simply a change of statistician in three or four universities. My impression is that new statisticians are rarely inducted into the arcana of their department by their predecessors. There have been large increases in Archaeology SH and JH, but if Ancient History is difficult to control the figures which pass as those of Classical Archaeology seem almost uncontrollable.

The figure for postgraduates seems to be absurdly inflated, and in general volatile, though I was surprised to discover how many postgraduates there were in my own department. There has always been scope for fantasy in returning postgraduate figures. The Taught MA figures must be more solidly based, since departments will have regular contact with students on this kind of course. They show an encouraging and interesting trend.

The winds of change can be heard, and felt. There are many factors, some of which I mentioned in the previous bulletin. The wish of government that a large number of students should study at their local university has been reflected in the innocent remarks of two 'returning officers' from what can be described as city universities, one of which was recently dispersed within its own university, and the other almost liquidated. Both commented on the upsurge of students for the coming year which will be seen in next year's statistics. To be urban is however not necessarily to benefit since even large and famous cities can be on the fringe of Classical Britain.

In Wales devolution will be a major and immediate influence. The universities there face a number of crises which will have to be resolved quickly, the issues are astonishingly

complex, and only in part based on the rifts in the Welsh political scenery. The Assembly will move quickly, the debates of which we will be given glimpses on television may provide compulsive theatre. Wales remains an intimate face to face society, names will be named, if only of institutions.

There are rumours of amalgamations elsewhere as departments face up to the next Research Assessment Exercise, trying to reconcile teaching, administration and research. And there appears to be a ceaseless movement of staff. Applying for jobs, even being interviewed, has for some become a way of life.

Departments in my own university are increasingly embracing distance teaching. Someone spoke enthusiastically of a university in Denmark which had 35,000 students with whom it communicated at a distance, but admitted that it was run somewhat like a call centre with a minimum of staff. Such institutions will run on staff/student ratios greater than 1:140. On such a system one university with a staff of about 35 could teach all the Classics students in Britain. The use of information technology may be the issue which should most concern us.

I return to what in a different guise is starting point of this coda. The biggest problem for many Classics departments in the very immediate future will be the relentless creation of new universities, the tilt towards vocational education and the need to compete in a market where the customers are impecunious students who need to recoup their losses. It will soon be difficult to remember when education was once not perceived as a marketplace.

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KEY TO TABLES

C = Classics
G = Greek
AH = Ancient History
ARC = Archaeology
BG = Beginners' Greek
BL = Beginners' Latin
NC = Non Classical
PG = Postgraduate
TM = Taught Masters

The top figure in the columns or tables referring to students is the number of students irrespective of whether all their time, or only a proportion of their time is spent in Classics departments. The figure in brackets is the Full Time Equivalent (FTE); that is two students, each spending 50% of their time in Classics, equal one FTE Classics student, ten students spending 90% of their time in Classics equal nine FTE Classics students. The Staff/Student Ratio is reached by dividing the FTE figure for all students in Classics departments by the number of staff.

TABLE A

	All Hons students in Classics depts.	All students in Classics depts.	UGC figure for Hons. students in Class.	Staff in Classics depts.	Overall Staff/ Student	1st yr. Hons. students	UCAS total admissions in Class.
1986	3032	6415	1671*	354.6	9.3	1059	567
	(2153.2)	(3291.3)				(684.2)	
1987	3287	6284	1699*	334.3	9.9	1276	557
	(2258.4)	(3301.9)				(753)	
1988	3117	6142	1157	326.5	10.0	1052	591
	(2232.4)	(3276.6)	1680*			(700.5)	
1989	3740	7396	1240	353.5	10.6	1419	698
	(2534)	(3750.3)	1782*			(865.1)	
1990	3935	7378	1329	355.7	11.4	1443	737
	(2744.1)	(4049.1)	1869*			(911.9)	
1991	3998	8206	1466	348.3	12.4	1437	813
	(2970.6)	(4306.1)	2006*			(1011.5)	
1992	4649	8911	1638	347.4	14.2	1692	
	(3445.6)	(4924.7)	2178*			(1194.7)	
1993	5214	9549	1790	351.8	15.1	1939	659
	(3848.3)	(5316.1)				(1338.5)	
1994	5731	9731	2310§	378.6	14.4	2168	669

	(4010.8)	(5445.4)				(1340.2)	
1995	5606	9356	2420§	361.2	14.7	2152	643
	(3804.3)	(5317.1)				(1287.9)	
1996	5647	9269	2552§	364.5	14.0	2122	
	(3812.3)	(5095)				(1271.7)	
1997	5762	9219	2596§	356	14.9	2109	999
	(4006.4)	(5288.6)				(1350.6)	
	[including	16616		363			
	OU figures]	(6252.1)					
1998	5610	9878	2678§	350.7	14.7	2071	1012
	(3898.3)	(5148)				(1290.6)	
	[including	16610					
	OU figures]	(6118.6)					
1999	5869	8882		342.7	15.3	2275	1012
	(4120.9)	(5233.4)				(1405.4)	
	[including	18922					
	OU figures]	(6961.4)					
2000	5499	8665		360.3	13.9	2125	
	(3802.7)	(4996.3)				(1361.8)	
	[including	16634		370.3			

	OU figures]	(6475.3)					

*It was considered that through a change of practice a substantial body of students were being miscategorised in the official statistics and an attempt was made over the years to calculate what could be considered the proper figure. It seems best on reflection to present the official figure, even if it is unfair, in its simplicity.

§These are figures supplied by the Higher Education Statistics Agency for student enrolments at all publicly funded HE institutions in the UK for subject code Q8 Classics.

TABLE B

	Classics, Greek, Latin	**Classics, Greek, Latin**	**Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology**	**Class. Stds., Anc. Hist., Archaeology**
	SH	**JH**	**SH**	**JH**
1986	1187	276	819	750
	(1045.6)	(138.1)	(623.4)	(346.1)
1987	1327	211	1030	717
	(1136.8)	(101.9)	(684.9)	(334.8)
1988	1231	224	779	883
	(1069.7)	(107.3)	(647.5)	(398.9)
1989	1253	251	1057	1179
	(1101.1)	(124.7)	(799.9)	(508.4)
1990	1256	290	1148	1241

	(1175)	(139.2)	(926.4)	(503.5)
1991	1278	288	1416	1016
	(1199.8)	(135.3)	(1162.9)	(472.6)
1992	1294	328	1648	1379
	(1210.1)	(153.7)	(1472.6)	(609.2)
1993	1345	269	1813	1787
	(1263.6)	(139.2)	(1629.7)	(815.8)
1994	1335	307	2370	1719
	(1197.9)	(148)	(1888.5)	(776.4)
1995	1234	323	2099	1950
	(1162.2)	(139)	(1661.1)	(842)
1996	1165	299	2011	2172
	(1098.1)	(129.7)	(1703.9)	(880.6)
1997	1243	263	2207	2049
	(1158.5)	(117.8)	(1822.3)	(907.8)
1998	1241	333	2001	2035
	(1181.4)	(155)	(1710.6)	(851.3)

1999	1178	298	2375	2018
	(1073.7)	(119.5)	(2036.2)	(891.5)
2000	1109	219	2068	2103
	(1019.4)	(96.8)	(1823.9)	(862.6)

TABLE C

	SINGLE HONOURS						**JOINT HONOURS**					
	C	**G**	**L**	**CS**	**AH**	**ARC**	**C**	**G**	**L**	**CS**	**AH**	**ARC**
1992	1160	12	166	854	712	82	63	42	223	548	713	118
	(1063.6)	(12.0)	(134.5)	(786.5)	(609.9)	(76.2)	(33.2)	(19.1)	(101.4)	(257.5)	(288.7)	(63)
1993	1193	21	131	970	761	82	47	28	194	604	1063	120
	(1134.1)	(14.7)	(114.8)	(867.6)	(682.7)	(79.4)	(31.5)	(13.7)	(94.0)	(291.3)	(464.0)	(60.5)
1994	1124	50	161	1173	974	223	76	39	192	813	768	138
	(1065.1)	(22.3)	(110.5)	(982.4)	(778.4)	(127.7)	(53.2)	(11.9)	(82.9)	(396.2)	(325.8)	(54.4)
1995	1133	19	82	1070	791	238	64	54	205	912	939	99
	(1071.7)	(14.1)	(76.4)	(925.1)	(649.9)	(86.1)	(34.2)	(19.5)	(85.3)	(441.0)	(347.9)	(53.1)

1996	1063	22	80	1121	809	81	72	43	184	885	1246	41
	(1009.9)	(17.7)	(70.5)	(921.6)	(701.3)	(81)	(35.9)	(14.3)	(79.5)	(430.3)	(433.3)	(17)
1997	1163	16	64	1226	931	50	56	37	170	762	1230	57
	(1087.7)	(13)	(57.8)	(1013.3)	(759)	(50)	(28)	(13.9)	(75.9)	(356.4)	(530)	(21.4)
1998	1078	54	109	1038	807	156	93	67	173	890	1022	123
	(1031.3)	(49)	(101.1)	(897.8)	(712.6)	(100.2)	(47.6)	(32.1)	(75.3)	(401)	(405.3)	(45)
1999	1072	24	82	1353	933	89	54	84	160	729	1159	70
	(1000.6)	(15.4)	(57.7)	(1107.9)	(844.3)	(84)	(27.2)	(21.2)	(71.1)	(353.1)	(487.7)	(50.7)
2000	1039	17	53	1179	791	98	53	30	136	627	1180	216
	(953.4)	(17)	(49)	(1066.9)	(685.2)	(71.8)	(26)	(11.9)	(58.9)	(292.4)	(497.8)	(72.4)

	OTHER										
	C	**G**	**L**	**CS**	**AH**	**ARC**	**BG**	**BL**	**NC**	**PG**	**TM**
1992	55	125	179	1259	1009	38	256	382	501	348	110
	(11.7)	(42.7)	(59.4)	(375.7)	(291.1)	(11.7)	(61.7)	(96.8)	(139.9)	(306.6)	(81.8)
1993	37	139	219	1484	640	93	257	375	560	364	167
	(18.3)	(40.5)	(60.3)	(428.0)	(168.4)	(25.5)	(49.1)	(79.7)	(140.8)	(317.8)	(139.4)
1994	24	135	195	1093	649	133	251	389	542	408	187
	(19.5)	(35.9)	(56.2)	(293.3)	(180.8)	(39.6)	(48.4)	(95.7)	(142.3)	(350.8)	(172.1)

1995	25	107	134	1079	549	94	208	356	608	445	145
	(17.3)	(29.1)	(44.7)	(271.2)	(159.1)	(26.1)	(44.7)	(79.5)	(164.8)	(395.5)	(125.1)
1996	19	96	144	852	640	56	228	330	646	452	159
	(15.9)	(25.4)	(42.4)	(196.8)	(160.5)	(18.1)	(53.3)	(84.7)	(163.4)	(378.2)	(144)
1997	12	50	126	2303	492	142	790	449	5917	381	192
	(7.3)	(12.9)	(29.2)	(769.1)	(124)	(32.7)	(219.4)	(157.9)	(403.8)	(327.1)	(162.3)
1998	46	45	84	2568	296	63	773	314	1010	555	246
	(18.9)	(9.5)	(19)	(945.3)	(78.8)	(17.2)	(181.2)	(83.2)	(216)	(465)	(186.2)
1999	41	98	109	8865*	249	121	665*	1211*	992	534	168
	(18.1)	(23.1)	(27.4)	(1431.6)	(75.8)	(32.4)	(148.1)	(286.6)	(202.3)	(449.5)	(145.6)
2000	9	48	105	7449*	318	140	626*	1206*	495	420	319
	(6.7)	(20.4)	(32.9)	(1354.8)	(75.3)	(37.8)	(133.6)	(269.6)	(133.6)	(363.1)	(244.8)

* figures marked with an asterisk include Open University figures.

Classical Studies in the Learning and Teaching Support Network

Lorna Hardwick

The Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) has twenty-four subject centres based in higher education institutions throughout the UK. It is funded by the four HE funding bodies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and aims to promote high quality learning and teaching through the development and dissemination of good practice in all subject disciplines. In addition to the subject centres' focus on subject expertise, LTSN will also offer generic support on learning and teaching issues that cross subject boundaries through a Generic Learning and Teaching Centre based in York. The LTSN as a whole is managed by an Executive based within the Institute for Learning and Teaching (ILT) in York. The LTSN's core activities are in setting up, supporting and developing learning and teaching networks; promoting and sharing good practices in learning, teaching and

assessment; facilitating exchange of knowledge and experience between users, experts, developers and innovators. It should also be noted that the LTSN does not produce courses or study packs.

The subject centres
The twenty four subject centres are a mix of single site and consortium-based centres, all located within relevant subject departments and hosted by HE institutions. The subject focus results from the recognition that for many staff in HE it is at subject level where most networking and exchange of learning, teaching and assessment practice takes place. Funding to support the subject centres is in place for three years with probable extension to five so it is possible to think in the medium term as well as in the short term.

Classical Studies
Classical Studies (which covers Classics and Ancient History) is part of a partnership centre - History, Classics and Archaeology, hosted by the University of Glasgow. The work in (Modern) History is based at the universities of Nottingham and Bath Spa.

Archaeology is at Leicester and Classical Studies at the Open University. The Subject Directors of the partner subjects meet regularly to discuss progress, future plans and possible areas of co-operation (to say nothing of completing the extensive documentation required by LTSN's accountability procedures). History, Classics and Archaeology share a regular Newsletter and a web site, managed by the Centre's IT Co- ordinator Dr Sonja Cameron. Sonja is very willing to visit departments and groups to discuss IT issues in learning and teaching (S.Cameron@arts.gla.ac.uk).

Staffing
Classical Studies has a team of three academics, Dr Lorna Hardwick (Subject Director), Dr Dominic Montserrat and David Fitzpatrick. The last two have been in post since August. Lorna and Dominic are permanent members of the Classical Studies department at the OU and have been seconded for part of their time. David has been appointed as Project Officer and will have particular responsibility for organising communications and conferences, organisation of support for networks and managing the publications of Briefing Papers, L and T bibliographies and Reviews (all of which will be available in paper copy and on the web site). Dominic's main role will be to develop initiatives in Classical languages learning and teaching, and to design workshops in consultation with departments and groups. Lorna is particularly interested in responses to the changing environment underlying curriculum design and learning and teaching strategies and also in ways of developing creative synergy between teaching and research. All the subject centre staff will be glad to respond to queries from individuals as well as to visit groups or departments (contact details are given below).

Advisory Panels
The work of the subject centres is also supported by advisory panels, which have been set up for each of the subjects. Panels meet approximately twice a year, supplemented by other contacts as needed. Notes of the discussions at meetings will be published on the web site. The [Panel for Classical Studies includes representatives of subject associations as well as individuals drawn from a variety of institutions and specialisms. The current membership of the Classical Studies Advisory Panel is:

Mr. C. Annis (ICS and Joint Library of the Hellenic and Roman Societies); Dr. E. Dench (Birkbeck); Prof. P. E. Easterling (Cambridge and Chair JACT Greek Committee); Prof. L. Foxhall (Leicester and Hellenic Society); Dr. L. Fotheringham (Nottingham); Ms. S. Knights (Filton College and Chair JACT Latin Committee); Mr. R. W. Lister (Cambridge Dept of Education); Dr. E. Pender (Leeds); Mrs. C. Roueche (KCL); Prof. R. W. Sharples (UCL and CUCD); Prof. M. R. Wright (Lampeter); Prof. G. Woolf (St Andrews); Dr. V. Zajko (Bristol). It is also hoped to appoint a postgraduate teaching assistant as a member.

Consultation/Needs Analysis

The subject centres are now moving from the set-up phase to become operational. During the set-up phase, Lorna Hardwick has been consulting widely with colleagues in a number of institutions and thanks are due to them for their generosity with time and ideas. Within the limits of budget and terms of reference it is important to establish priorities which take account of immediate needs and also to allow room for strategic initiatives which can support the subject community's development in key areas.

A Needs Analysis Questionnaire was send out in June to departments of History, Classics and Archaeology and to Cambridge and Oxford Colleges (if you have not yet returned your copy, please do so soon). By the end of July, 439 responses had been received across the three subjects, 119 of which were from Classics/Ancient History. Analysis is still in progress but some general points have been drawn out:

Across all three subjects respondents expressed interest in developing computer / web-based learning; in developing teaching in non-traditional ways (such as group work); in developing a wide range of approaches to assessment; in using the subject centre as a source of information, especially relating to the Internet and to innovations in L and T. There was marked lack of interest in research into learning and teaching (which suggests that traditional forms of educational research are not well regarded).

Responses from Classicists and Ancient Historians indicated that language learning for beginners (both Greek and Latin) was seen as a priority. There were also sign)ficant expressions of interest in developing methods of assessment of students' oral presentations; locating high quality material on the Internet; reviews of web and computing resources; developing students' study skills; encouraging active learning; learning by dissertation; teaching through translation. These preferences will guide our forward planning. It was also encouraging to see a number of offers to review L and T materials, to contribute to practitioner networks and to serve as departmental contacts (more of these last needed please).

Programme of Activities

A subject centre **Colloquium on Classical Language teaching in universities** is to be held on Thursday January 4th at Milton Keynes. Panels will include a wide variety of short presentations on practical aspects with plenty of time for discussion. Examples of offers received to date include: motivating language students; supporting weaker students; new approaches to grammar; strategies for post- beginners; web-based support materials; Latin on the web; recent developments in schools. A Briefing Paper will be available after the Colloquium. It is also hoped to support a network to take forward work on priorities identified in the discussions. All those who are involved in teaching Classical languages in HE are welcome to attend the Colloquium (further details from David Fitzpatrick).

Subject centre staff will be pleased to **contribute to department staff development days** by arrangement or to offer **half day workshops** on particular areas of learning and teaching in Classical Studies. All workshops will be subject orientated and will focus on the practicalities of working with students. We are also able to offer **workshops for postgraduates who are about to start some teaching** or have recently done so. Although we hope in the future to develop some regionally based workshops and seminars, at this stage we are particularly aware of the travel problems that may be experienced by colleagues in the more geographically remote departments and visits to those departments who request it will be a priority.

There is, of course, no intention to duplicate staff development provision already made in individual universities. Furthermore, we would like to emphasise that subject centre staff are in no sense 'trainers' but are professional colleagues.

There is a considerable amount of excellent teaching and learning practice which colleagues tell us they would like to have more widely disseminated, if they had the time and the means. The subject centre may be able to help with this and we would like to hear from those who would like to share their expertise and innovations with others (for example through authoring short **Briefing Papers or Case Studies). Conference papers and panels** are an important way of promoting debate. A panel on the implications of the changing environment for Classical Languages is being organised by the subject centre for the Classical Association Meeting in April 2001. **New lecturers, part-time staff and graduate teaching assistants** form a vital part of the subject community. Those interested in participating in workshops, contributing to Briefing Papers or joining an email discussion group are asked to contact us. We would particularly like to hear from people not yet in established posts or whose names do not appear in the CUCD booklet so that we can make sure everyone is informed of forthcoming events and has the opportunity to contribute.

Future Opportunities

We are currently considering ways in which the Briefing Paper format might be extended to include some web - based resources annotated for key L and T aspects, such as active learning, group learning etc. It is also possible that small R and D consultancies might be available for lecturers wishing to set up and evaluate L and T projects. Furthermore, modest financial support might be available to support networks of practitioners who wish to get together to discuss specific L and T issues in Classics and Ancient History. Please let us know if you are interested in any of these possibilities.

Finally

The Classical Studies part of the subject centre has been set up to be of and for its community. It is not an arm of QAA. Its ethos is collegial and facilitative, not directive or prescriptive. Our role is to provide support and to enable the dissemination of successful and interesting practices in learning and teaching. We would like to encourage debate and the exchange of ideas to the same level that is taken for granted in our research community. Do join with us.

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ASSESSMENT IN ROMAN EDUCATION

TERESA MORGAN

'I go to school, I have entered, I have said, "Greetings, Master," and he has kissed me [and] returned my greeting. My secretary slave has handed me tablets, writing case, model, in my place I clean the (surface of the tablets?), I copy the model as instructed; as I have written, I show [my work] to the teacher; he has corrected it and smoothed it over; he orders me to read. After I have been ordered I have given [the text] to another. I learn glosses, I have recited (?) them. But immediately, a fellow pupil has dictated to me ... while this is going on, the little boys go, on the teacher's orders, to a separate place, and one of the older boys has provided syllables for them; others return in order to the assistant, and write names; they have written verses, and I have taken dictation in the first group. Then as we sit down, I go through commentaries, language, the art (of grammar). When I have been called to read I listen to expositions of the reading, interpretations, the (grammatical or historical?) persons ...' *(CGL* III 639-40, 646 trans. Morgan 1998, 66 n. 33)

Stories like this, themselves schooltexts dated to about the third century CE and originating probably in Gaul, give us the most vivid picture we have of education and assessment in the Roman world. In these days of increasing assessment of everyone and every step of education, it may be mildly diverting to consider how our predecessors assessed and were assessed, and with what implications for Roman education as a whole.

The 'classroom' in this story is informally structured; in other stories there is more than one teacher, one who listens to pupils reading and a subordinate who gives out and corrects writing exercises (Dionisotti 1982). Children all seem to work on their own, though they talk to each other (and fall out). Except when a teacher dictates grammatical information, there is no sense of the group as a focussed 'class', and this impression is reinforced when in some stories, pupils arrive and depart at different times. This style of organization seems to be particularly characteristic of the earlier stages of education; at a later stage, when they begin to learn rhetoric, pupils take turns to declaim to the whole class, and the teacher gives out his corrections for the benefit of the whole group (Quintilian *I.O.* 2.2).

Even among the rich, it was not assumed that children should be sent to school at all - exposing them too young to competition, or the influence of their peers, might be damaging. Quintilian is keen to counter this fear (1.2.1ff):

'It would be folly to shut our eyes to the fact that there are some who disagree with [Quintilian's own] preference for public education owing to a certain prejudice in favour of private tuition. These persons seem to be guided in the main by two principles. In the interests of morality they would avoid the society of a number of human beings at an age that is especially liable to acquire serious faults: I only wish I could deny the truth of the view that

such education has often been the cause of the most discreditable actions. Secondly they hold that whoever is to be the boy's teacher, he will devote his time more generously to one pupil than if he has to divide it among several.'

Quintilian's response is that children can pick up bad habits just as well at home, if their parents or teacher are not moral. It is the duty of everyone, whether at home or at school, to make sure that moral standards are upheld (shades of recent debates about the relative roles of home and school in the production of juvenile delinquents). But it is noteworthy that all the emphasis, here as elsewhere, is on the best possible development of a notional individual pupil under his (rarely her) teacher. There is no indication that it might be useful, let alone necessary, to compare a pupil's progress with that of others - neither for the teacher, nor for the family nor the pupil himself. Apparently, it will simply be clear to everyone concerned whether the pupil is growing up a credit to his family and community or not.

In schools, virtually all the forms of assessment which modern education takes for granted are absent. As far as we know, teachers did not test the aptitude of potential pupils before they took them on. (The exceptions might be professional philosphers, if they regarded entry into their group of disciples as a privilege to be earned.) In general, if you could pay, you could get an education. Nor was there any means of testing aptitude in any abstract sense, at any point: no intelligence tests. Apart from the immediate test of reading out your work to a teacher, we hear nothing of tests in the classroom. There were no end of year exams, nor any point when the teaching of the last few weeks was summed up. The absence of tests may be linked with the fact that at no time in the Roman world was there any legal requirement to be educated at all, nor any specifications about the age at which children should enter or leave school. Some Stoic philosophers recommended that literacy be taught as early as three; Quintilian settles for seven; others suggest as late as ten. No-one stipulates the best age to stop basic schooling, but since under the Empire people were taxed as adults from the age of 14, that is one likely stopping point. So there was no incentive for anyone to consider whether there were things that children should have learned at any particular age, let alone to devise tests to find out if they had done so. The idea of age cohorts, so ingrained in modern practice, was not associated at all, as far as we can see, with the kind of education that involved learning to read and write. The place where it did feature was in athletic training, where boys of the same age were grouped together to compete.

This does not mean that pupils' activities were not assessed in any way. In the school scene above, there seems to be a good deal of immediate overseeing of pupils' activities. They are given an exercise to do, show the results to the teacher and are congratulated or corrected. The standard is evidently in the mind of the teacher - and Roman grammarians and rhetoricians were certainly proud of their (self-)perception as expert 'guardians of language' (Kaster 1988). (No source on Roman education mentions the idea of work being taken away by the teacher to be assessed. At a later stage, though, pupils are certainly expected to do 'homework' - to read a set text in private - and it might be clear later whether they had read it or not.)

As far as we know, there were no exams in schools. There were certainly no 'passing out' exams - no such thing as obtaining a formal qualification in a subject to show that you had been educated, or to what standard. (In the later Empire there were increasingly formal entrance requirements to the imperial civil service, the closest thing to exams in this period (Marrou 1975, 310ff).) The place which comes closest to an institutionalized practice of

assessment seems to have been the rhetorical school, where pupils declaimed to each other: on which Quintilian is moved to say (2.2.9ff.):

'I strongly disapprove of the prevailing practice of allowing boys to stand up or leap from the seats in the expression of their applause. Young men, even when they are listening to others, should be temperate in manifesting their approval. If this be insisted upon, the pupil will depend on his instructor's verdict and will take his approval as a guarantee that he has spoken well ... For if every effusion is greeted with a storm of ready-made applause, care and industry come to be regarded as superfluous. The audience no less than the speaker should therefore keep their eyes fixed on their teacher's face, since thus they will learn to distinguish between what is praiseworthy and what is not ...'

Here, Quintilian comes as close as anyone ever does to describing a formal practice of assessment.

The absence of formal assessment in education was made up, or its place taken, by, on the one hand, a good deal of informal interest and interference by parents, other relatives and family friends, and on the other, a highly organized and institutionalized series of competitions for the young in both literary and physical disciplines.

That adults should take an informal interest in the young, including their education, was a well-established convention by the later Roman Republic, especially in aristocratic life. It was common for an established orator to take a young man, a family friend or relative, under his patronage and let the youth follow him around and watch him perform in court. Much younger children also attracted advice: Pliny (*Ep.* 4.13.1ff.), Ausonius (*Praef.* 1) and Jerome (*Epp.* 25, 29, 34, 37, 41, 45, 107, 108, 127) are three who have left us letters of guidance to children (in the case of Jerome, a girl) about their education. In the *Cena Trimalchionis*, Trimalchio shows off his young son to his dinner guests (*Sat.* 46):

My little boy is growing into a follower of yours already. [He is talking to a guest.] He can do simple division now; if he lives, you will have a little servant at your side. Whenever he has any spare time, he never lifts his nose from the writing board ... He has stuck a heel in his Greek now and begins to relish Latin finely, even though his master is conceited and will not stick to one thing at a time....

If there were no examinations, there was plenty of competition, and it came in two principal varieties: athletic and literary/musical. Athletic competitions seem to have been institutionalized for boys in their teens, while musical ones seem more likely to have been restricted to adults or ephebes. Some were open to all citizens or to anyone, and some were in practice restricted to professionals. But the many lists of victors which survive on stone show that competitions for the young were often a large part of the proceedings. Their importance is attested, too, by the fact that if a well-educated young man died young, his literary prowess, along with his preternatural virtue, sagacity and charm, often featured in his epitaph:

'Weep when you see me, Dioscorus, son of Greece,
Wise in the Muses and a new Heracles.' (Bernand 1969, no. 82, from Karmouz)

'My fatherland is Lycopolis; I am Elemon
whom fate cut off in his twenty-first year;
servant of Phoebus and the Muses, I was known to everyone.' (Bernand 1969, no. 74)

Athletics featured especially in the most distinctive and colourful, if marginal, form of educational assessment in the Roman world: the competitions of the Spartan *agoge*. Assessment was built into the Spartan system from the moment of birth, when the Ephors inspected the baby and, if it showed signs of weakness or disability, put it out to die (*Lyc.* 16.1). Survivors were taken from their mothers at the age of seven, to be communally educated and tested rigorously at every stage for strength, obedience, endurance, cunning and ruthlessness. Boys and young men competed in age cohorts, frequently in public and in religious contexts, at all kinds of games and military skills. The most notorious, by the Roman period, the festival of Artemis Orthia, pitted younger and older boys against each other, while fellow-worshippers and tourists from all over the Empire watched with horrified avidity (Pausanias 3.14.8ff; p. 49ff; Kennell 1995, 49ff.). How the modern school sports day has declined from its roots.

Towards a sociology of Roman education

The absence of examinations, and the presence of competition, in Roman education, has some interesting sociological implications. I have discussed the features of competitive systems in more detail elsewhere (Morgan 1998, 74ff.), but in summary, I take it that examinations, broadly, qualify some people to do something and disqualify others. They tend to locate people in groups by subject and achievement, and qualifications so obtained last throughout life, even if they are superseded. Examinations often have a competitive element - when a fixed percentage, for instance, gets the top grade, or fails - or when the thing for which the exam is supposed to qualify people is in short supply.

Competition has some features in common with examination - it often claims, for instance, to be upholding an absolute standard. In other respects it is rather different. Competitions tend to rank rather than qualify participants, and rank them singly rather than in cohorts. The results typically last only until the next competition, when the winner is either invited to be tested again, or is not retested but is replaced by a new winner.

We can conjecture some of the effects which the existence of competitions, but not examinations, in Roman education may have had on its participants. The pupil would have had a degree of freedom in what he learned, but a corresponding degree of anxiety: he could never be sure that what he learned would be what the cultural group to which he aspired would appreciate (Burt 1992, 33). The lower his social status, the less access he would be likely to have to information about what the culture-group valued and the more likely he might be to play it safe (for some modern comparisons, see e.g. Anyon 1981; DiMaggio 1982); Willis 1977). Thus in accounts of elementary schooling, and also in surviving schooltexts, we find pupils beginning with the most central canonical authors: Homer, Virgil, Menander, Euripides and Terence.

Teachers must have felt some of the same effects of competition. The absence of a curriculum would give teachers freedom but also responsibility: they would have to judge what reading, and what writing or speaking exercises would best serve their pupils' social, as well as intellectual interests. If they got it right, we can expect them to have acquired proportionately high kudos and more pupils. Quintilian, for instance, as a highly successful teacher, is able to claim that he can make not only good orators but good citizens, good men and even rulers of the world (1 pr. 10; 2.20.4ff; 12.1.26-8, 2.6-7, 11.1).

A competitive educational system gives a society, or a particular culture group, a high degree of control over who enters that group (Little 1990). The social benefits of this for the controlling group are obvious. Roman elites, whether at local or empire-wide level, were conservative and self-perpetuating. Though in practice there was a good deal of social mobility, especially correlated with wealth, elites sought to maintain themselves and present themselves as a stable group. The criteria for belonging to the educated Roman elite cannot for practical purposes have been the same among the aristocracy of Rome and in small provincial towns in Egypt or Britain, but the competitive system allowed each dominant group to define it at their own level. And competition made it possible for the culture group, in the shape of anyone from local magistrates to the emperor himself, to decide who had excelled in competition sufficiently to qualify for entry to the socio-cultural elite (for a modern comparison, see Alba & Moore 1978). Education worked as a force for socio-cultural stability, or at least slowed or controlled the rate of change: there was never any threat of large groups of examined and qualified, officially cultured Romans waving their qualifications and demanding to join the elite. If education had produced such qualified cohorts, as it did for at least a generation in Britain in the mid-twentieth century, Roman education might have been a force for social change. But there is no sign that any ruling group in antiquity considered the possibility of challenging the social order through education.

Teachers and assessment

I have touched on the freedom and responsibility of teachers in the business of assessing their pupils. In some contexts, however, and increasingly in the later Roman Empire, teachers themselves were subject to assessment.

During much of the hellenistic and earlier Roman periods, there was little or no practical assessment of teachers. Anyone could walk into a town, sit down in the market place and claim to be a teacher. If they attracted, and kept, pupils, the claim would be regarded as substantiated. Philosophers and rhetoricians reckoned their reputation by how many pupils sought their company and how much they could charge, and they were vigorous in promoting the value of what they had to sell. Ps.-Plutarch tells a story of the Greek philosopher Aristippus, who demanded a thousand drachmas for teaching a child. "Heracles!" the father responded. "I can buy a slave for that!" "Then you will have two slaves," retorted Aristippus, "your son and the one you buy." (*De lib. educ.* 4f-5a)

Suetonius reports the interesting case of the freedman Marcus Verrius Flaccus, who enhanced his reputation by instituting a novel form of competition in his school, which Suetonius says was very successful. As a result, he gained imperial patronage, as a result of which he was able to charge vast fees, thereby increasing his prestige exponentially (*Gramm. et rhet.* 17.1-2, transl. Kaster):

Marcus Verrius Flaccus gained fame especially from the character of his teaching: for he made a general practice of pitting students of similar ages and attainments against each other in competition, to give their talents a workout, and would propose not only the subject for their compositions but also a prize for the winner - typically, some old book that was attractive or rare. Because of this renown he was also chosen by Augustus to teach his grandsons, and so he transferred his teaching to the Palatium [presumably the imperial palace on the Palatine hill], taking the whole school with him - though on the condition that he

accept no more students thereafter; he taught in the atrium of Catulus' house ... receiving 100,000 sesterces a year.

Since Flaccus was a grammarian, his innovation was probably to import into grammatical teaching a practice something like the one of which we found Quintilian disapproving earlier, from the rhetorical stage of education.

With official imperial interest in teachers came new forms of assessment. In the first place it was associated with municipal and city posts in philosophy, rhetoric and grammar (Dittenberger, 577; *MDAI* (A) 1907:278; *IG* 12.9.235). Under the Roman empire these posts increased in number until most large or aspiring towns and cities had one (Kaster 1988, 233ff.). We do not know what the system of appointments was, but by its nature it probably involved assessment of a number of candidates, and quite likely some form of competition, perhaps composition and performance of a speech or poem. Towns and cities which had gymnasia must also have assessed their athletic instructors, who were appointed at public expense (Marrou 1975, 110ff.).

From the 301CE onwards, there was also much closer assessment, at least in theory, of what type of teacher a teacher was. Diocletian's price edict fixed different salaries for different types of teacher on an ascending scale of expertise: teacher of letters, 50 denarii per pupil per month; teacher of arithmetic, 75; shorthand writer, 75, Greek or Latin grammarian or teacher of geometry, 200; orator or sophist, 250 (7.66-71). We do not know whether, how or by whom this regulation was enforced - and there is evidence that other parts of the edict were wholeheartedly ignored, so it may never have been a burning issue in practice - but it meant that at least in theory, a teacher had to be able to define him or (possibly) herself, and prove the definition right.

There was one brief period during which the assessment of teachers was carried out in a more hostile spirit, with significant effects. In 362 the Emperor Julian, as a vigorous and vociferous convert from Christianity to paganism, issued an edict forbidding Christians to teach the traditional pagan disciplines, mainly on the grounds that it would be immoral, since the literary subject matter of education - Virgil, Terence, Horace, Cicero and their kind - contained references to gods in whom they did not believe (*Cod. Just.* 13.3.5; *Ep.* 36). This edict is likely to have been directed at grammarians and rhetors in public 'chairs' in towns and cities, and it was effectively enforced: Christians were stopped from teaching and lost in the process a valuable public platform and status symbol.

The practical effects of this measure did not last long, since Julian was killed in 365, and no more pagan emperors succeeded him. But in Christian circles it stirred up a debate about the relationship between Christianity and pagan culture which bitterly divided the church authorities until Augustine achieved a pacifying compromise two generations later. A compromise - insisting that the forms, techniques and wisdom of pagan writers could only benefit the young, whatever their background, religion or expectations - which is still the basis of our commitment to the subject today.

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