



CSCP Support Materials for Eduqas GCSE Latin



Component 2

Latin Literature and Sources (Themes)

Love and Marriage

Introduction

For examination in 2024-2026

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Cover Image: *Lovers from Arretine vase. Photograph by Roger Dalladay*

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This document refers to the official examination images and texts for the Eduqas Latin GCSE (2024 - 2026). It should be used in conjunction with the information, images and texts provided by Eduqas on their website:

[Eduqas Latin GCSE \(2024-2026\) Component 2 Theme B: Love and Marriage](#)

Useful additional material relevant for this Theme, may be found in the [Cambridge Latin Course fourth edition, Book V, Stage 38](#)

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Theme B: Love and Marriage

Specification

Candidates are expected to be familiar with the following aspects of the theme:

- the various forms of Roman marriage;
- rituals at Roman weddings;
- attitudes towards women, as suggested by the material prescribed for study in the [Eduqas GCSE Latin prescription](#).

Candidates should study the pictures in the [Eduqas Prescribed Material Booklet](#), one or more of which will be used as a basis for questions in each question paper. Candidates will also answer questions on the texts in the [Eduqas Prescribed Material Booklet](#).

Exploration of the theme

In this theme, the following topics will be covered. While the main bullet points below coincide with the Eduqas specification, those further indented do not constitute part of the syllabus but are suggested here as a means of exploring the main themes:

- the various forms of Roman marriage
 - The purpose and expectations of marriage
 - Marriages contracted with and without *manu*
 - Divorce and remarriage
 - Relationships beyond marriage
- rituals at Roman weddings
 - The bride's attire
 - The wedding ceremony and *iunctio dextrarum*
 - The wedding procession
- attitudes towards women
 - *Matronae* and the social expectations of Roman wives
 - Chastity and fidelity
 - Love poetry and women as objects of conquest
 - Moral reform and adultery

This introduction contains notes on all these topics to assist in the teaching of the literature. **Candidates will only be examined on the content of the prescribed material.**

Some links between texts and images and the theme's three bullet points are suggested in the following sections.

Forms of Roman marriage

Marriage was an important duty for Roman men and women, an act of piety to the gods and a means of producing legitimate children for the empire (see **Epitaph to Claudia**). Girls usually married in their late teens or early twenties (sometimes even younger), Roman men in their late twenties. Elite marriages were arranged affairs, usually negotiated by the *paterfamilias* and sometimes by respected *matronae* (for example, **Pliny, To Calpurnia Hispulla, his wife's aunt**). Marriage contracts could serve to formalise a match (see **picture 2**), but Roman law did not officially require them: a couple needed only to express their intention to marry and to live together.

Roman law recognised two types of marriage, those contracted with and without *manu* (meaning 'hand'; see **picture 2**). A marriage contracted *cum manu* meant that the bride passed from the authority of her father into that of her husband, but by the first century BC, marriages contracted *sine manu* were the norm. In this arrangement, a bride remained a member of her father's family and under his legal jurisdiction, likely offering her more protection and some financial independence from her husband.

Although Roman society celebrated the ideal of the *univira* – the one-man woman (like Penelope in **picture 5** and **Martial, Power of Love**) – remarriage was often necessitated by the death of a spouse. Divorce was common and carried no stigma, much to the frustration of some Roman moralists (**Seneca, Changing Morals**).

Of course, intimate relationships also existed beyond the formal ties of marriage. One of our sources depicts passionate feelings and love between couples of the same sex (**Martial, An Enigma**). Meanwhile, even though complete fidelity was expected of Roman wives, elite men were free to form relationships with anyone of low social status (*infamis*), including enslaved people, actors and sex workers (**as in picture 6**).

Rituals at Roman weddings

The Roman wedding introduced the new couple to the community and marked their entry into the duties of married life. Brides put away their childhood possessions, symbolising their transition to adulthood. Roman wedding ceremonies took place at the home of the bride's parents. The bride would typically wear a white dress and a *flammeum*, a flame-coloured veil intended to invoke the life-long fidelity of the wife of the Flamen Dialis, the chief priest of Jupiter, as depicted on the funerary vase in **picture 4**. Her hair was parted with a spear in an unusual ritual and plaited into six individual braids.

As **pictures 2 and 3** show, a key part of the marriage ceremony was the *iunctio dextrarum*, the joining of the couple's right hands to signify trust and commitment to their marital obligations. The couple's family and friends attended and brought gifts, and an ox was sacrificed to invoke the gods' blessings for the couple and their life together (as in **picture 1**).

Afterwards, the bride was taken to the house of her husband in an elaborate procession. The revellers sang and danced, and a torch of white pine was lit in honour of Ceres, the goddess of the hearth, harvest and fertility (**picture 3**). In the reliefs shown in **pictures 1 and 2**, the torch is held by the god of marriage, Hymen. The bride used the torch to light a fire in her new home, a symbol of the children it was hoped the match would produce.

Attitudes towards women

The ideal Roman woman was a *matrona*, a term that denoted her married status and motherhood. Women were bound by the traditional expectations of conservative Roman society; it was hoped they would bear children for the family and as a civic duty to the state (**Epitaph to Claudia**). The Romans celebrated historical and literary paradigms of the good and faithful wife, including the Sabine Women and Odysseus' wife Penelope (**Martial, Power of Love** and **picture 5**). Exemplars like these were praised for loyalty, bravery and fidelity: in one story told by Pliny, a virtuous wife was even willing to die for her husband (**Pliny, Faithful unto death**).

Chastity and fidelity were difficult attributes to prove, so *matronae* were expected to signal them through their behaviour, by dressing modestly, working wool (**picture 5**), good household management and taking an interest in their husband's affairs (**Pliny, To Calpurnia Hispulla, his wife's aunt**). Subservience was highly prized; Cicero criticised his sister-in-law Pomponia for putting her own feelings first (**Cicero, A Family Matter**). A wife's commendable behaviours reflected well on her husband and were her contribution to the family's honour and status.

By the late republican and early imperial period, some considered the model of the austere Roman matron a little old fashioned. Many elite women freely attended the baths, seaside resorts (**Martial, Power of Love**) and lavish dinner parties (**Seneca, Changing Morals**), impressing their companions with their learning and lively conversation. The Roman love poets may have been besotted with sophisticated elite women, but they were typically no less misogynistic than the traditional moral culture they claimed to reject. Catullus viewed women like Lesbia as changeable and deceptive (**Catullus, Poem 8 and 70**), and Ovid saw women as creatures to be 'tamed', 'worn down' and 'conquered' (**Ovid: Advice to a rejected lover**). Horace asked Venus to punish Chloe for not loving him, showing how little the Romans respected women as individuals with free choice (**Horace, Finished with Love**).

For the Roman moralists, the gap between reality and the traditional ideal created fears about moral decline. In 18BC and 9AD, the emperor Augustus introduced marriage legislation which not only penalised the elite for failing to marry and have children, but also punished adulterers. Under these laws, Augustus' own daughter, Julia, for whom the laws were named, was exiled. Seneca claimed that fashionable women were responsible for high rates of adultery and divorce (**Seneca, Changing Morals**; see also **Martial, Power of Love**). This seems ironic to us now, given how free Roman men were to pursue extramarital relationships (**picture 6**).

Some suggestions for further reading on *Love and Marriage*

Useful additional material relevant for this Theme, may be found in the [Cambridge Latin Course fourth edition, Book V, Stage 38](#).

An accessible overview of Roman marriage ideals and expectations in the imperial period can be found [here](#).

U.E. Paoli, *Rome: its people, life and customs* (1967), Ch.9: a concise summary of the position of women in Roman society, the various types of marriage, and details of wedding ceremonies.

The World of Rome (edited by P. Jones and K. Sidwell, CUP 2008) offers perceptive insights for the legal and social aspects (pages 208-217, 227-229) .

Jérôme Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (Penguin, 1991), Ch.4, provides thorough treatment of the whole theme, especially good on the changing role of women, marriage and divorce.

Suggestions for teaching

Key aims are:

- Understanding the meaning of the Latin
- Literary appreciation
- Developing an understanding of the topic.

It is often useful to adopt the following approach when introducing students to original literature:

- Read the Latin aloud to emphasise phrasing and stress word groups
- Break up more complex sentences into constituent parts for comprehension
- Focus on comprehension of the text and understanding the content through questioning and using the vocabulary
- Look closely at how the Latin is expressed and the ways in which the literary devices enhance the meaning.

Although a sample translation is provided in the course resources, teachers might want to encourage their students to make their own version after various options have been discussed and evaluated. The first step is a literal translation, then something more polished in natural English that is as close to the structure and vocabulary of the original Latin as possible. Students will soon see that a degree of paraphrasing may be required when the Latin does not readily translate into correct and idiomatic English.

Students will bring their own knowledge of love and marriage to this topic. Explorations which compare ancient and modern attitudes towards women, love and marriage, will help with student engagement and can cast fresh light on attitudes in both periods, although some of the more sensitive issues raised in this prescription should be approached with care.

It may be useful to tackle the source material thematically. The texts are presented in the booklet in alphabetical order according to author in order that the teacher is free to use their professional judgement in presenting the material to their students in whatever order seems best.

About the Teacher's Notes

The following *Notes* focus on language, content, style and literary effect. The *Discussion and Questions* focus mostly on literary appreciation and interpretation. Rhetorical and technical terms are used throughout the notes. Some of these may be unfamiliar to teachers new to teaching Latin literature; a definition will be supplied. As the teacher is free to teach these sources in any order they wish, there will be duplication within the notes from time to time.

The notes are designed to provide for the needs of a wide spectrum of teachers, from those with limited knowledge of Latin and who are perhaps entirely new to reading Latin literature, to teachers experienced in both language and literature. It is hoped that all will find something of use and interest. **Teachers should not feel that they need to pass on to their students all the information from these notes; they should choose whatever they think is appropriate.**

Some of the information contained in the notes is for general interest and to satisfy the curiosity of students and teachers. **The examination requires knowledge outside the text only when it is needed in order to understand the text.**

The Teacher's Notes contain the following:

- An Introduction to the author and the text, although students will only be asked questions on the content of the source itself.
- Notes on the text to assist the teacher.
- Discussion suggestions for students and overarching Themes which appear across more than one source.
- Suggested Questions for Comprehension, Content, Style and Culture to be used with students.
- Further Information and Reading for teachers who wish to explore the topic and texts further. None of this is intended for examination.
- Acknowledgement of resources used.