

Epigraphic Texts and Contexts

Code: 104221
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Ancient Studies	OB	3
English and Classics Studies	OT	3
English and Classics Studies	OT	4

Contact

Name: Marta Oller Guzman

Email: marta.oller@uab.cat

Teachers

Alessando Ravotto

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

There is no previous requirement, but it is highly recommended to have passed the first and second year subjects on Classical languages and Archaeology.

Objectives and Contextualisation

At the end of the course, the student will have to be able to:

- Interpret the content of a Greek and / or Latin inscription.
- Explain the formal and content characteristics of an epigraphic text.
- Use the specific terminology of the epigraphic discipline in the analysis and in the commentary of the inscriptions.
- Handle *corpora* and epigraphic databases.
- Integrate the historical-archaeological and philological information in the commentary of an epigraph.

Competences

Ancient Studies

- Be able to express oneself orally and in writing in the specific language of history, archaeology and philology, both in one's own languages and a third language.
- Extract and interpret data from texts written in an ancient language in different formats applying knowledge of the auxiliary sciences of history (epigraphy, numismatics, codicology, palaeography, etc.).
- Identify and interpret ancient historical remains to relate them to social, political and economic events in the Mediterranean societies of the period of Antiquity.
- Interpret texts written in Latin and Greek to understand the history and Classical civilisations.
- Interrelate linguistic, historical and archaeological knowledge of the ancient world with knowledge of other areas of the humanities, mainly ancient literature, philosophy and art.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.

English and Classics Studies

- Interpret written texts in Latin and Greek to learn about classical history and civilizations.
- Interrelate linguistic and historical knowledge of the ancient world with knowledge of other fields of the humanities, mainly literature and archaeology.
- Students must be capable of collecting and interpreting relevant data (usually within their area of study) in order to make statements that reflect social, scientific or ethical relevant issues.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Use digital tools and specific documentary sources to gather and organise information.

Learning Outcomes

1. Analyse linguistic, historical and archaeological data, incorporating, where necessary, contributions from other disciplines related to Ancient Studies.
2. Appropriately use the specific terminology of the discipline of epigraphy in reading, interpreting and commenting on an inscription.
3. Comment on a particular feature of the ancient Mediterranean world from a holistic perspective, including all the data available within the framework of Ancient Studies.
4. Comment on a specific aspect of the ancient Mediterranean world with a global approach, which includes all the data available within the framework of Ancient Studies.
5. Compare information from written sources with archaeological data in relation to historical processes or events in classical antiquity.
6. Describe the different media for the epigraphic texts and know their different uses and values.
7. Extract information from the Greek and Latin texts on aspects of *realia* especially related to their historical and cultural context.
8. Handle databases on textual sources, both literary and epigraphic.
9. Integrate archaeological and philological information referring to an epigraph.
10. Know and explain the differences of form and content between an epigraphic text and a literary text and their different documentary value.
11. Locate truthful and meaningful to the reading and interpretation of literary texts or epigraphic information.
12. Preparing an oral and written discourse in the corresponding language in a proper and organized way.
13. Suitably use the specific terminology of epigraphy in reading, interpreting and commenting on an inscription.

Content

BLOCK 1

1. Epigraphy. Definition. Epigraphy, history, philology, and archaeology
2. Tools for the study of epigraphy: *corpora*, databases, and prosopographic repertoires for Greek epigraphy

3. Evolution of writing systems in Greece
4. Epichoric alphabets
5. The Ionic alphabet and its gradual adoption
6. The epigraphic testimony as a direct relic of the past. Its limitations
7. The importance of epigraphy for the knowledge of Greek dialects
8. Corpus of inscriptions:
 - 8.1. Earliest alphabetic inscriptions
 - 8.2. Votive inscriptions
 - 8.3. Funerary inscriptions
 - 8.4. Legal inscriptions
 - 8.5. Honorific inscriptions
 - 8.6. Curse inscriptions

BLOCK 2

1. Tools for the study of epigraphy: *corpora* and databases for Latin epigraphy
2. The oldest known inscriptions and the issue of archaeological context
3. Epigraphic medium: material, form, and function. Public and private epigraphy. Monumental epigraphy. Milestones, legal inscriptions, and *instrumenta inscripta domestica et publica*: military diplomas, amphorae, bricks, water pipes
4. The making of the epigraphic monument: material extraction - quarries, tools, and craftsmen. The *officina epigraphica*: artisans and techniques (letter size, layout, epigraphic field, engraving)
5. Latin epigraphic alphabet and script. Formulas and abbreviations. Their graphic evolution until the 2nd century AD
6. Male and female onomastic formulas. Historical evolution. Citizens and foreigners. Slaves and freedmen. The *cursus honorum*
7. The archaeological context and its inscriptions: funerary (necropolis), votive (temples and sanctuaries), honorific and public works (public space)
8. Greek and Roman inscriptions in Catalonia

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Explanation of theoretical content	33	1.32	10, 5, 6, 13, 11, 2
Practice of reading, analyzing and commenting inscriptions	15	0.6	10, 5, 2
Type: Supervised			
Monitoring personal work	10	0.4	5, 12, 9, 2
Reading, interpretation and commentary of inscriptions	15	0.6	1, 6, 8, 7, 2

Type: Autonomous

Commentary of inscriptions	15	0.6	1, 6, 12, 7, 3, 9, 2
Complementary readings	10	0.4	11
Study of the theoretical content	30	1.2	5, 9, 11
Use of epigraphy study tools	5	0.2	8, 11, 2

The teaching methodology of this subject will consist of alternating the theoretical explanations about each one of the topics listed above with the completion of a series of practical exercises that will help the students to become familiar with the reading and interpretation of the epigraphic texts.

Theoretical content. It will be taught in master classes, aimed at offering the knowledge (linguistic, historical, archaeological, etc.) necessary to be able to read and contextualize an inscription. In these sessions, the relationship of the epigraphic text itself with its linguistic and palaeographic characteristics, with the inscribed object, with its archaeological context, etc. will be emphasized.

Practical content. It will be taught in the master classes and it will illustrate the theoretical contents by reading and commenting the inscriptions.

During the course, if possible, there will be a practical field trip to a museum facility or archaeological site in Barcelona.

Personal work. The student will have to carry out a continuous work throughout the course, both in class and autonomously, on a set of inscriptions that will be delivered at the beginning of the course in the form of dossier. The student will have to be responsible for carrying daily the recommended work of translation and comment.

Since numerous scientific studies show that reading on paper improves the understanding and memorization of the contents, while facilitating critical reflection, it is strongly recommended that all the materials available on the Virtual Campus are printed and that the activities and exercises are always work on paper.

On the other hand, the use of digital devices (tablets or computers) and mobile phones in the classroom will be restricted to teaching activities and always at the request of the teaching staff.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Active participation during the course	10%	0	0	10, 12, 7, 4, 3, 2
Analysis and commentary of an inscription	10%	7	0.28	1, 10, 5, 12, 13, 8, 7, 3, 9, 11, 2
Work on contextual aspects	10%	7	0.28	1, 10, 5, 7, 4, 3
1st written test (block 1)	35%	1.5	0.06	1, 10, 6, 12, 7, 9, 2
2nd written test (part 2)	35%	1.5	0.06	1, 6, 12, 7, 9, 2

I. This subject includes two assessment methods:

1) Continuous evaluation

Continuous evaluation is a process that allows students to know their academic progress throughout the course. The evaluation consists of the following activities:

1. Class participation (10%)
2. 1st written test [Units 1-8] (35%)
3. 2nd written test [Units 9-13] (35%)
4. Personal comment of an inscription (10%)
5. Work on aspects of context (10%)

2) Single evaluation

The single evaluation will take into account the following activities:

1. Epigraphic commentary and archaeological contextualization of two texts included in the dossier (10%)
2. 1st written test [Units 1-8] (35%)
3. 2nd written test [Units 9-13] (35%)
4. Personal comment of an inscription (10%)
5. Work on aspects of context (10%)

II. Conditions to be evaluated

Not assessable

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

Assessable

If the instructor has received more than 30% of the student's assessed activities (exercises, tests, etc.), he/she will be evaluated on the "fail to excellent (Distinction)" scale, according to the percentages mentioned in the corresponding section.

To pass the course (from "pass" to "distinction" grades), the student, at a minimum, will have to:

- Have obtained an average grade ≥ 4 in the two written exams (and, if applicable, in the recovery exam).
- Have completed the two written assignments (points 4 and 5).

In case the sum of the weights of the marks is 5, but one of the above requirements is not met, the student will be scored with a 4.5 (fail).

III. Reassessment terms

To be able to present to the reassessment exam, the student:

- must have an average mark of at least 3.5.
- must have previously been evaluated in a set of activities, the weight of which is equal to at least 2/3 of the whole mark.

In the recovery exam, the student can be examined on both blocks of the course (for a total of 70% of the grade), or only on the block they have failed (for 35%).

IV. Review procedure

The student has the right to review all the periodic exercises, the partial and final exams and the assignments, in class and / or in the tutorial hours.

The day for the revision of the provisional final mark and the revision of the reassessment test, will be announced in the minutes.

The student has the obligation to check the minutes of the marks before its validation, in order to ensure that there has been no error in the transfer of marks by the faculty.

Plagiarism

In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

AI

This course allows the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools only in tasks explicitly authorized by the teaching staff.

The student must clearly (i) identify which parts have been generated using AI technology; (ii) specify the tools used; and (iii) include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and final outcome of the activity.

Lack of transparency regarding the use of AI in the assessed activity will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade may be lowered, or the work may even be awarded a zero. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Bibliography

Archaeological context in general:

ALCOCK, SUSAN E.; OSBORNE, ROBIN (ed.) (2012). *Classical archaeology*, Malden.

BODEL, JOHN P. (ed.) (2001). *Epigraphic evidence: ancient history from inscriptions*. London.

BODEL, JOHN; DIMITROVA, NORA (ed.) (2014). *Ancient Documents and Their Contexts: First North American Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy (2011)*, Leiden / Boston.

ECK, WERNER (1996). *Tra epigrafia, prosopografia e archeologia: scritti scelti, rielaborati ed aggiornati*. Vetera, 10. Roma.

Throughout the course, further references will be provided to specific publications (or to parts of more extensive publications).

Corpora and periodicals:

Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique = *BCH*.

Bulletin Epigraphique = *Bull. Ep.*

Carmina epigrafica graeca = *CEG*.

Carmina latina epigraphica = *CLE*

Corpus Inscriptionum latinarum = *CIL*

Corpus Inscriptioinum Graecarum = *CIG*

Inscriptiones graecae = *IG*

Inscriptions Romaines de Catalogne = *IRC*

Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum = *SEG*.

Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik (*ZPE*).

Greek and Latin epigraphy manuals:

BERARD, FRANÇOIS; FEISSEL, DENIS; PETITMENGIN, PIERRE; ROUSSET, DENIS; SEVE, MICHEL (2000). *Guide de l'épigraphiste*, Paris.

RÉMY, BERNARD; KAYSER, FRANÇOIS (1999). *Initiation à l'épigraphie grecque et latine*. Paris.

On Greek epigraphy:

CORTES COPETE, JUAN MANUEL (ed.) (1999). *Epigrafía griega*. Madrid.

GUARDUCCI, MARGHERITA (1987). *L'epigrafia greca dalle origine al Tardo Impero*. Roma.

MCLEAN, BRADLEY H. (2002). *An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Alexander the Great down to the Reign of Constantine* (323 B.C.-A.D. 337). Michigan.

BERTRAND, JEAN-MARIE (1992). *Inscriptions historiques grecques, traduites et commentées*. Paris. [No incorpora el text grec, però les traduccions i els comentaris poden ser d'utilitat.]

MEIGGS, RUSSELL; LEWIS, DAVID M. (1971). *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* Oxford (rv. 1989) = *ML*.

HOZ, MARÍA PAZ de (2014). *Inscripciones griegas de España y Portugal*. Madrid. = *IGEP*.

RODRIGUEZ SOMOLINOS, HELENA (1998). "Inscriptiones Graecae antiquissimae Iberiae" (*IGAI*). In: JULIO MANGAS; DOMINGO PLACIDO (eds.). *Testimonia Hispaniae Antiquae II/A*, Madrid.

On Latin epigraphy:

ANDREU, JAVIER (coord.) (2009). *Fundamentos de epigrafía latina*, Madrid.

BRUUN, CHRISTER; EDMONDSON, JONATHAN (eds.) (2014). *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy*, Oxford-New York.

BUONOPANE, ALFREDO (2009¹, 2021²). *Manuale di epigrafia latina*, Roma.

CALABI, IDA (1991⁴). *Epigrafia latina*, Milano.

COOLEY, ALISON E. (2012). *The Cambridge Manual of Latin Epigraphy*, Cambridge.

CORBIER, PAUL (2006). *L'épigraphie Latine*, Paris.

Software

This course only requires the most commonly used office software.

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed