**More U.K. schools to teach Latin –**
From https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2108/210802-latin-5.html

The UK has announced a $5.5 million programme to teach
Latin at 40 of its schools. The Latin Excellence Programme
aims to "level up" opportunities for students in some
government-run schools. Latin was spoken in the area around
Rome 2,000 years ago. It is taught in 49% of the UK's "elite"
private schools but only 2.7% of state schools. The UK's
education secretary said: "Latin has a reputation as an elitist
subject, which is reserved for the privileged few, but the
subject can bring so many benefits to young people." He
added: "Latin can help pupils with learning modern foreign
languages."
The programme has sparked a heated debate. Many people
have ridiculed it as being a "poorly-funded gimmick". A
politician wrote: "Latin is elite because only people who are
guaranteed successful careers, thanks to family connections,
can afford to waste time on...understanding...the dialogue in
[ancient] books." An author said she only uses Latin to
"occasionally translate things on tombs". A teacher said money would be better spent on living languages like Chinese that would enable children "to get ahead in the world," or on computer coding.

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**Summary:**

**Source / date**

**Topic:**

**I] The UK’s government’s initiative**

**II] The controversy**

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**Summary:**

**Source / date**: a website called Breakingnews English

**Topic:** The introduction of Latin in secondary schools’ curriculums

**I] The UK’s government’s initiative**

Currently Latin is taught in almost half of Britain’s elite private schools but in only a very small minority of state schools (2,7%). The UK government wants to redress this imbalance.

The UK government has made the decision to introduce Latin at 40 of the country’s schools.

It will spend $5.5m on this progamme.

**II] The controversy**

The UK government argues that studying Latin can bring a lot of advantages. For instance it can help students lean modern languages.

However other people (politicians especially) disagree. They say it’s a waste of time that only the elite can afford.

Moreover teachers claim that it would be more useful to spend this budget on living languages like Chinese or on computer coding.

**COMMENTARY**

This document highlights the UK government’s decision to re-introduce an ancient language in a few British schools. How relevant is it? Should the school system define other priorities?

**I] How relevant is it?**

Latin is useful if you study languages with Latin roots. It can help British pupils improve their mother tongue as English is a blend of Anglo-Saxon and Latin words introduced into the English language through Britain’s historical links with France (the Norman conquest) and through the Church.

Moreover, Latin has a complex grammar and analysing it can help you understand how other languages are built (declensions, tenses…)

In addition, studying Roman civilization can help students understand their own cultural heritage.

**II] Should the school system define other priorities?**

It depends on how you define the goals of the school system. If we focus on the utilitarian benefits of school, i.e., school should train and enable students to be better equipped to succeed in today’s world, then surely teaching Chinese should be a priority as China’s influence is growing in the world. It is essential to know their language and their culture to understand their approach to international relations, trade, politics etc.

However learning Latin does not prevent you from learning Chinese too.

Besides we should bear in mind the reasons why the UK government wants to introduce Latin: it is to allow state schools to compete with private ones. It only concerns a very small minority of students. Shouldn’t it spend more money on helping underprivileged teenagers to get access to higher education?