



**Alumna** Dr Kathryn Tempest  
**Subject** BA Classical Studies, MA Classics, PhD Classics  
**Graduated** 2000, 2001, 2006  
**Place of Work** University of Roehampton  
**Position** Senior Lecturer

On completion of her BA, MA and PhD Dr Kathryn Tempest secured employment as Lecturer in Latin Literature and Roman History at the University of Roehampton; she was promoted to a Senior Lectureship in 2009. As well as teaching both undergraduates and postgraduates, Kathryn has continued her own research. She is the author of *Cicero: Politics and Persuasion in Ancient Rome*, and she has recently co-edited a volume with Dr Christos Kremmydas on *Hellenistic Oratory: Continuity and Change* (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

# Great minds go on to great places

## Were you considering any other universities before joining Royal Holloway?

I'd been to open days and had interviews at other universities but Royal Holloway was different. The lecturers' learning was infectious and everyone was really friendly. The location was perfect too but in the end it was the department that clinched it for me.

## What did you enjoy most about studying in the Classics Department?

It was a great experience because of the lecturers themselves. They were able to communicate their subjects with great knowledge, passion and enthusiasm; they really made you *want* to work hard. The support from the administrative department was fantastic too. We also had a lot of social events: there was a formal Classics dinner at the end of the year and the Classics Society organised a trip to Greece. There was a lot done to help you gel with your peers and that contributed to your experience as a student.

## Why did you choose to continue with postgraduate study at Royal Holloway?

I had always got on well with all my lecturers and the support I'd received as an undergraduate student was a key factor in my decision to continue my studies at Royal Holloway. After my MA, Professors Lene Rubinstein and Jonathan Powell were particularly

supportive in my application for a PhD and they both really encouraged me to continue my research here. I'm not sure I'd have done it without them.

## What did you enjoy most about your courses?

The beauty of studying Classics is that within your degree programme you can study philosophy, languages, literature, history, art & archaeology—and more! The Department at Royal Holloway includes lecturers who are pioneering researchers in all of these areas and I really enjoyed the diversity of the courses they offered. As an MA student I also enjoyed taking advantage of the federal nature of the University of London and going to King's College and UCL as part of my studies. Even as a PhD student you never felt alone: there were regular postgraduate events and study days, so that you continued learning about the Classical world while pursuing your independent research.

## What is the most important thing that Royal Holloway has taught you?

As far as general 'life skills' are concerned, I'd say that what I developed most at university was the confidence to express my own opinions. I was a bit more reserved when I started at Royal Holloway but the whole experience encouraged me to speak

out, debate and develop an academic argument. But perhaps the most important thing that Royal Holloway taught me personally was the difference a good lecturer can make. I'd like to think that I can pass onto my own students the same level of support and enthusiasm that I received throughout my own studies.

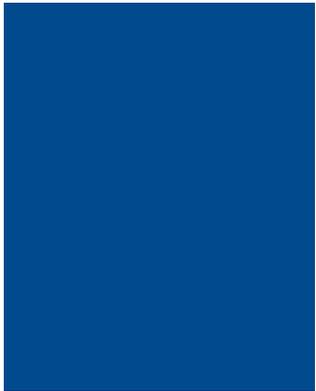
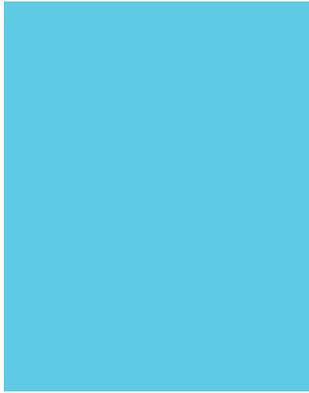
## Why did you decide to join the Department of Humanities at University of Roehampton?

As a PhD student you are encouraged and offered the opportunity to take on part time teaching to help you develop your experience with adult learners. It was during my second year as a PhD student that I came into contact with the University of Roehampton. They needed someone to teach Latin Literature for a term to cover a member of staff's period of research leave, so I applied and was successful. In many ways Roehampton reminded me of Royal Holloway: it has a beautiful campus near London and the Department was also pushing forward as a team to develop a coherent and academically challenging programme. After my initial introduction to the Department, I stayed in touch and did some further teaching. I was thrilled when a permanent post became available in 2007 and I have been there ever since. Our Classical Civilisation programme is continuing to grow and it is great to be a part of that.



# people with passion

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## What do you enjoy most about teaching?

Personally I love teaching the ancient languages for that moment when it just ‘clicks’. But ultimately the aim is to get students to read Greek and Latin literature in the original language, and when they get to that point it’s brilliant – for them and me! From a non-selfish point of view, however, I just enjoy seeing so many students wanting to learn Classics every year. And it’s really rewarding to watch them graduate knowing that they’ve retained, or rather have increased, their initial passion for the subject.

## Which is your favourite course to teach?

I guess my favourite course to teach is Virgil’s *Aeneid* because students absolutely love it. Most of them have experienced it at A Level which makes it quite a challenge because you need to get them to look at it with fresh eyes and to break down their preconceived ideas. You get a great sense of achievement when you work with students and you get them to realise that there is so much more to this poem than their previous experiences had led them to expect. Because of this, you can really witness a staggering development as you teach it over the year.

## What do you enjoy most about researching?

I enjoy the collaborative nature of research: I think research is traditionally seen as a solitary business, working alone somewhere in a library – and it very often is. But the sharing of ideas in conferences, seminars and larger projects is a very exciting and vital aspect too. Royal Holloway has recently created a Centre of Oratory and Rhetoric which will be a fantastic arena in which to conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary work. I’m also currently working with Dr Christos Kremmydas, who I first met when we were PhD students, on an edited volume called *Hellenistic Oratory: Continuity and Change*. The volume analyses the evidence for oratory in a period of history for which no written speeches have survived in full, so it has been great fun and a challenge. That’s probably what I enjoy the most – having questions and ideas, but being able to share and debate them with other people.

## What exciting projects are you working on at the moment?

I’ve recently secured a book contract with Yale University Press for a study of Marcus Brutus. Everyone always studies Caesar so I am hoping to look at the ancient sources more from the perspective of what we can learn about his assassin. I’m really looking forward to getting started on it!

## What advice would you give to aspiring academics?

If I’m honest, it is difficult to give advice as I didn’t aspire to be an academic in the strictest sense: I probably knew I wanted to be a teacher but I hadn’t really narrowed it down further until I reached the end of my PhD. All I can say is that you have to do it because you love both teaching and research as they are huge elements of the job. For me it developed naturally from a love of both and I haven’t looked back.

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