

I'm incredibly grateful to the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, who enabled me to undertake the British School at Athens' *Archaeology and Topography of Ancient Greece* summer course, an intensive three-week course. As a Classics student, I had undertaken some archaeology modules at university and was keen to develop practical skills in the field.

Week 1

The first week consisted of a mixture of on and off-site lectures. Among the places we explored were the Athenian Agora, the Acropolis and its museum, the Roman Agora, and Hadrian's Library. A highlight was being able to enter the Parthenon and the Temple of Hephaestus – being able to see and learn about the active restoration attempts was fascinating.

At the BSA, our tutors gave lectures about epigraphy, pottery, prehistory, and the politics of archaeology.



The Temple of Hephaestus in the Agora – one of the best-preserved temples of antiquity!

Week 2

We ventured out of Athens on day trips to Marathon, Brauron, Delphi, and Thebes. As I'm particularly interested in cult and religion, Delphi and Brauron were highlights for me.



The Sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron



The archaeological site of Delphi

Week 3

The last week was spent travelling around the Peloponnese: Mycenae, Nemea, Tiryns, Sparta, Mystras, Pylos, Messene, Bassae, and Olympia. I found the Bronze Age sites incredible. I had studied some of the palaces in lectures but seeing them in real life was something else. The layout of the Palace of Nestor is so striking, with the room divisions being so clear.



The Treasury of Atreus, Mycenae



The Palace of Nestor, Pylos. I found the elevated viewing platform a great idea; not only does it protect the site from weather but also allows for visitors to see the layout of the palace and gain a sense of the distribution of space.



The beautiful views of Nafplio, where we spent the evenings swimming and relaxing by the beach.

Our last day was at Olympia, where we all raced each other on the original Olympic running track. We ended the course with a poetry competition at a nearby bar, and the next day, after thirty sites and eighteen museums, the course had ended.

The course has ignited my passion for archaeology and allowed me to explore my interests further. I'm looking to potentially undertake a master's in archaeology, and this has been an incredible experience in helping make that decision.

I'm so grateful for the amazing tutors for their passion and knowledge, and to the lovely course mates I met and spent time with. I would also like to again thank the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies for making this experience possible.