**Roman City Life – Culture Glossary**

domus - a large Roman private house in the city or town

insula - Roman name for an apartment building

atrium - main room of the domus

impluvium - pool for water in the atrium of a domus

compluvium - opening in the roof of the atrium to allow light and water into the atrium

mezzanine - an intermediate floor of a building, open to the floor below

House of Menander - one of the largest and most impressive houses in Pompeii

House of Octavius Quartio - a house with a large garden and canal in Pompeii

House of the Wooden Partition - A typical domus in Herculaneum. The partition to the tablinum remains today.

The Insula of Diana - A large apartment block in Ostia

infamis - lit. shameful / disgraceful. The very low legal status given to a number of groups in the Roman world, including gladiators, charioteers, actors and prostitutes

scaenae fons - the back wall of a stage set in the Roman theatre, usually two or three storeys tall and with elaborate decoration

orchestra - in a Roman theatre, the semi-circular area in front of a stage normally reserved for VIP seating

stock character - a character in a work of literature or drama who is easily recognisable as a particular type of person from their character traits

strigil - a curved scraper used to remove oil and dirt from the body

paterfamilias - the male head of a Roman family

Lares - the Roman family's household gods, representing the spirits of the family ancestors

patron - a Roman who gives financial or other such support to a client in return for work and favours

client - A Roman who would attach himself to a wealthier patron in order to boost his income and business opportunities

litterator - A teacher for primary aged children in the Roman world

Grammaticus - A teacher for secondary aged children in the Roman world

rhetor - A teacher for tertiary aged boys in the Roman world

stilus - A pen-like implement used to write on wax tablets

cena - Roman word for a dinner party

senator - member of the highest social class in Rome

magistrate - an elected politician in Rome

consul - the most important public official in Rome after the emperor

praetor - the second most important category of public office in Rome, responsible for the law courts and imperial administration

equites - the second social class in Rome