

## Uses of Quam

LATIN 101B • Spring 2003 • Wheaton College



---

I. *Quam* can be employed as the feminine, singular, accusative form of the **RELATIVE PRONOUN** (Qui, Quae, Quod):

*Librum illi, quam amas, dedit:* “He gave the book to that woman whom you love.”

**N.B.** You should also be on the lookout for *quam* in compounds formed from the relative pronoun (e.g. *Quidam*)

---

II. *Quam* can be employed as a **COORDINATING CONJUNCTION** with comparative adjectives:

*Hic puer est maior quam ille:* “This boy is taller than that (boy),”

**N.B.** Because *quam* functions as a coordinating conjunction, both words linked by *quam* will be in the same case. Note also that this construction is rare with the nominative and accusative cases, with which the ablative of comparison is preferred.

---

III. *Quam* can be employed as an **ADVERB** used to intensify adjectives:

1) *Quam* + an adjective in the **POSTIVE** degree: “how”

E.g. *Quam beatus est vir magnae sapientiae:* “How blessed is the man of great wisdom.”

**N.B.** This “how” does not introduce a question but intensifies the force of the adjective. Therefore, the above example essentially means: “The man of great wisdom is truly or very blessed”; this construction is NOT identical to the superlative or comparative degree of adjectives but is similar in meaning.

2) *Quam* + an adjective in the **SUPERLATIVE** degree: “as x as possible”, where x = the adjective

E.g. *Quam beatissimus est vir magnae sapientiae:* “the man of great wisdom is as blessed as possible.”

**N.B.** This construction indicates that the subject of the adjective possesses the absolute greatest possible amount of the quality indicated by the adjective.

---

**N.B.** “quam” also appears in several conjunctions and adverbs, such as *quamvis*, “however much” and *quamquam*, “although”