

Biology A

Examination Board: OCR

Staff Lead

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Why Study Biology A?

Biology is the study of life: past, present and future. It is a fascinating subject; the study of which will see you learn about the natural world, how and why we and other organisms have come to exist, survive and thrive. The A level in biology is designed to expand on the knowledge you gained at GCSE level, giving you a far more in depth understanding of the key concepts.

Your knowledge of biology may be used in the future to understand and perhaps solve problems with important worldwide implications such as disease control, food production, conservation of endangered species, controlling world population and dealing with the pollution caused by humans.

The first year topics involve studying the foundations of biology: cell structure, gas exchange, blood and the heart, plant structure and function, biochemistry, the key macromolecules of life, diet, evolution, a range of diseases including malaria and emphysema and the workings of the immune system.

Second year topics include the nervous system, studying the histology and functioning of the kidney, liver and pancreas, the biochemistry of photosynthesis and respiration, genetics, biotechnology, ecology and population growth.

You will also learn many transferable skills like maths, literacy, research, curiosity, critical analysis, application of knowledge, problem-solving and critical thinking.

A level Biology can be challenging, as it requires a deep understanding of complex biological concepts and a mastery of scientific research methods. Throughout the 2 year course you will be taught by a very experienced team of teachers who will endeavour to guide you through the complexities and enrich your understanding of how life works.

Career Paths & Degree Courses

A level Biology can open up a range of career opportunities and university degrees including the study of pure biology, biochemistry, genetics, zoology, botany, veterinary sciences, medicine, nursing, radiotherapy, psychology, environmental sciences and many more.

Requirements

At least five 9-4 grades at GCSE, with a minimum average grade score of 4.5. At least 6:6 grade in Science including 6 or above in Biology and Chemistry components/exams. Mathematics and English at grade 6 or above.

Biology A H420		Assessment	Content In Exam Paper
Paper 1	Biological Processes	2 hours and 15 min written exam - 37% of A2	Modules 1, 2, 3, 5
Paper 2	Biological Diversity	2 hours and 15 min written exam - 37% of A2	Modules 1, 2, 4, 6
Paper 3	Unified Biology	1 hour and 30 min written exam - 26% of A2	Modules 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Practical element of course is also assessed in Module 1 - part of all 3 written examinations

Pass or fail of the Practical Endorsement, carried out during practical sessions over the 2 years in lessons.