A LEVEL

Biology

A Level Biology is designed to engage and inspire by showing how understanding contemporary issues requires a grasp of fundamental biological concepts. Studying Biology teaches the skills of asking questions, making observations, evaluating evidence, and solving problems.

The course builds on the concepts and skills developed in GCSE Science. Biologists learn how living things work, interact with one another, and evolve.

Biology is presented as an exciting, relevant, and challenging subject. The combination of academic rigour and practical focus ensures that the course is both stimulating and exciting.

COURSE CONTENT

This two-year course contains a range of topics with 12 required practicals embedded into the teaching.

The course is structured around the following topics:

Year 12:

- Biological Molecules
- Cells
- Organisms Exchange Substances with their Environment
- Genetic Information, Variation and Relationships Between Organisms

Year 13:

- Energy Transfers in and Between Organisms (A Level only)
- Organisms Respond to Change in their Internal and External Environments (A Level only)
- Genetics, Populations, Evolutions and Ecosystems (A Level only)
- The Control of Gene Expression (A Level only)

SKILLS REQUIRED

GCSE Grade 8 or above is required in Biology due to the rigours of this course. Separate rather than combined GCSE Biology is highly recommended as a precursor to studying at A Level. In exceptional cases, applicants with a Grade 7 may be considered on the understanding that the course can be challenging for such individuals. At least 10% of the marks in Biology assessments will require using mathematical skills. These skills will be applied in the context of the course and will be at least higher tier GCSE mathematics.

ASSESSMENT

All course content is examined at the end of the two-year course:

Paper 1:
Year 12 content. 2 hours. 35% of final marks.
Paper 2:
Year 13 content. 2 hours. 35% of final marks.
Paper 3:
Years 12 & 13 content. 2 hours. 30% of final marks.

Practical Skills Assessment
The assessment of practical skills is a compulsory requirement of the course of study for A Level qualifications in biology, chemistry and physics. Throughout the course, students undertake 12 practical sessions in which they will demonstrate their competency. Practical skills are internally assessed and moderated externally. A practical skills endorsement is reported alongside (but does not contribute to) the A Level grade.

ENRICHMENT

The department organises a number of educational experiences, trips, fieldwork and clinics each year to contextualise students' learning.

FUTURE PATHWAYS

Biology provides access to a wide range of career and education opportunities, such as a degree course in Biology, Zoology, Botany, Biochemistry, Medicine, Nursing, Dentistry, Psychology, Pharmacy, Environmental Science, Microbiology, Biotechnology and many others.

EXAM BOARD

AQA 7402

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