

AS/A2 BIOLOGY

Entry requirements:

GCSE BB or above in Science Dual Award or GCSE grade B or above in Biology.

Examination board:

AQA

Teachers:

A. Smith, A. Bradbury, M. Cates, K. Hallam, N. Mainey, E. Smith.

Timetable organisation

5 lessons of one hour per week. Each class has 2 different teachers.

Main Syllabus areas

The AS course involves three units:

- 1 *Biology and Disease (disease, digestive & gas exchange systems)*
- 2 *The Variety of Living Organisms (variation & adaptations, biochemistry, cells)*
- 3 *Practical and Investigative Skills (practical work from units 1 & 2, assessed set tasks).*

The A2 course consists of three further units:

- 4 *Populations and Environment (ecosystems, nutrient cycles, human impact, speciation)*
- 5 *Control in Cells and in Organisms (nervous system, hormones, homeostasis, genes)*
- 6 *Practical and Investigative Skills (practical work from units 4 & 5, assessed set tasks)*

Method of assessment (AS)

Unit	Assessment method	Date	Weighting
<i>Biology and Disease</i>	Written paper 1 hour 15 minutes	Jan 2009	33% of total AS 17% of total A level
<i>The Variety of Living Organisms</i>	Written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	June 2009	47% of total AS 23% of total A level
<i>Practical and Investigative Skills</i>	Internal Assessment	On-going	20% of total AS 10% of total A level

Method of assessment (A2)

Unit	Assessment method	Date	Weighting
<i>Populations and Environment</i>	Written paper 1 hour 30 minutes	Jan 2010	17% of total A level
<i>Control in Cells and in Organisms</i>	Written paper 2 hours 15 minutes	June 2010	23% of total A level
<i>Practical and Investigative Skills</i>	Internal Assessment	On-going	10% of total A level

Qualities required

You need to be interested in the subject, and have a willingness to work hard and undertake independent study outside lesson time. You need to have good practical ability and organisational skills. You will have regular practical sessions.

Links with other subjects

Students often choose to study Biology with other sciences such as Chemistry or Physics. In addition Biology complements subjects such as Psychology, Sports Studies or Geography well. Mathematical skills are also desirable for Biology. Ability in Chemistry at GCSE is a useful, but not essential qualification for studying Biology.

Career prospects

Over 300 different biological degree courses are offered by universities in the UK. All require a pass at A Level Biology as desirable for entry. The majority of courses lead directly into areas of employment, e.g. Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Pharmacology, Medicine, Dentistry, Pathology, Medical Biochemistry, Nutrition and Food Sciences. Areas such as Biotechnology, Microbiology, Agriculture, Ecology and Genetics are becoming increasingly important in society. A Level Biology is not restricted to those aiming to study the subject in further education. Students with an interest who do not need a particular A Level combination will find the course stimulating and relevant. Practical work develops pupils' skills that can be applied to many situations in and outside science.