

OCR Advanced Level Biology



Entry Requirements

Students should have achieved a minimum of 5 GCSEs (Please note that subjects can only be counted once); national data shows that this course is not suitable for students with an average GCSE points score of less than 46.8. Successful students of this course have achieved a minimum of a grade B in Double Science or C grades in Triple Award Sciences. Students will be expected to purchase a lab coat for themselves either through the school or independently.

Course Description

Biology is a demanding but most interesting and topical Science. It should not be viewed as the soft Science but as the challenging and exciting subject it is. Biological topics are always in the news and include GM crops, The Human Genome Project, Designer Babies, Environmental Issues from Global Warming to Biomass as alternative fuels, to name but a few. These issues are poorly understood by the general public who lack the investigative, analytical and practical skills gained from a study of Biology at A level and beyond. Studying Biology will equip you with the skills needed to have an informed opinion about these topical issues. Biology can be linked with many subjects such as Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics which complement the biological studies and R.E which can lead to many ethical debates.

Assessment

The AS course has two units of study:

- Cells, Exchange and Transport (assessed by a written paper in January that has a weighting of 30%)
- Molecules, Biodiversity and Human Interactions (assessed by a written paper in June that has a weighting of 50%).

The A2 course has two levels of study:

- Communication, Homeostasis and Energy (assessed by a written paper in January that has a weighting of 15%)
- Control, Genomes and Environment (assessed by a written paper in June) that has a weighting of 25%).

At both AS and A2 Level there is a Practical Assessment that tests Qualitative, Quantitative and Evaluative Skills taken under controlled conditions in the laboratory. These have a weighting of 20% at AS and 10% at A2. The A2 final grade is made up of marks from the AS and A2 units.

Career Opportunities and Pathways

'A' Level Biology is a valuable subject leading to many Science degrees. Career opportunities are many and varied and include Medicine, The Caring Professions, Environmental Careers, Journalism, Teaching, Pharmacology, Forestry, Social Work, Sports Studies, Forensics and Physiotherapy. This is just a selection and the skills learnt in 'A' Level Biology prepare the student for active participation in society.

Subject staff contacts for further information:

Miss C Orange at Blake Valley

Mrs H Banfield at Kingsmead

Mrs H Tuli at Norton